



THE INDEPENDENT

3,029

WEDNESDAY 3 JULY 1996

WEATHER: Cloudy with showers

40p (inc GST)

The heat is on as Britain moves 100 miles south

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Britain will be transformed, in the next 25 years, into a country with warmer climate and higher sea levels. The changes will have the effect of moving the country more than 100 miles south.

Britain's climate in 2050

Summer temperature (°C)
change from 1961-90 average
temperature increase
up to 1.2 1.2-1.8 1.6-2.1



Summer rainfall (%)
change from 1961-90 average
more rain less rain
9+ 6-9 3-6 0-3 3-6 6-9 9+



populated and intensively farmed parts of the country.

According to a government report published yesterday, by 2050, the temperature alteration will be equivalent to moving from Manchester to Oxford.

Tourism and leisure industries are expected to boom, especially in southern England, but the Scottish ski industry may be wiped out by a lack of snow and higher winds.

Most aspects of national life will be affected, creating a range of winners and losers. Home heating bills may fall because demand for fuel is expected to drop by 3 per cent by 2050. Yet across the southern half of England water bills may rise sharply to pay for new reservoirs as demand soars. "Summer droughts are forecast to be more severe and frequent in the south," says the report.

The main beneficial effects of global warming will be on forestry, where tree plantations will grow more quickly, on cattle and sheep grazing in a warmer and wetter Scotland and northern England, and in tourism and recreation.

But it is expected to have a net adverse effects on soil erosion, wildlife, the insurance industry, health, water supplies and crop farming in the Midlands, southern England and Wales.

The document, written by a panel of 22 experts, was launched by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, in advance of international negotiations on combating global warming later in Geneva later this month.

He hopes it will increase the pressure on governments of wealthy nations to pledge themselves to curbing the pollution in the first ten years of the new millennium.

The report examines the impact of climate change in 2020 and 2050, based on the latest forecasts from the Meteorological Office's Hadley Centre. This Government-funded centre in Bracknell, Berkshire is one of a handful around the world using supercomputer simulations to predict how the atmospheric build-up of heat-trapping gases will alter air and sea temperatures, currents, winds, rain and snowfall.

There is now a consensus among climate experts that the 0.75 degrees C rise in global average temperatures over the past century is likely to be maintained.

Yesterday's report points out that three of the five warmest years in the Met Office's 337-year Central England Temperature Record occurred in the past ten years - 1989, 1990 and 1995. The summers of 1976 and 1995 were the warmest ever recorded in England.

Britain and the rest of the world are expected to become steadily warmer through the next century and beyond, as the consumption of fossil fuels and the output of greenhouse gases goes on rising.

There are no international agreements in place which begin to make a substantial attack on the threat.

Average UK temperatures are expected to be about 0.9 C higher than the 1961-1990 average by 2020, and 1.6 C higher in 2050. While total annual rainfall is predicted to increase by 5 per cent by 2020 and 10 per cent by 2050, summer rainfall is expected to decline over most of England and Wales.

White Christmases will become even rarer, and Britain will become gradually windier with gales becoming 30 per cent more frequent midway through the next century.

Whilst more frequent heat waves could lead to thousands of extra deaths each year, these are likely to be more than offset by a reduced number of deaths during milder winters.

Many beech trees and "street trees", planted along the pavements of towns and cities, are expected to fall victim to the hotter, drier summers in the southern half of Britain.

Sea levels in southern England will be approaching two foot higher in 2050.

Review of Potential Effects of Climate Change in the United Kingdom, DoE, £28, HMSO.

Labour windfall begins to rot

CHRIS BLACKHURST
Westminster Correspondent

Labour's plans for a £3bn windfall tax on profits of the privatised utilities may have to be radically redrawn, with several companies expected to completely escape paying the tax.

Among the companies likely to be excluded are British Gas, Scottish Power and Scottish Hydro. Also expected to be exempt from the levy, £1.5bn of which Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, has pledged to job-creation and training schemes, are the small water companies, which supply 25 per cent of the market.

Other companies which have taken over utilities since privatisation are also arguing that they should escape the charge, as they have not benefited from the windfall that went to the original shareholders. Those that would fall into this category include foreign operators which have been snapping up the privatised electricity companies.

The prospect of Labour being forced to revise its plans to collect the £3bn windfall tax, which has quietly been renamed as the one-off utilities monopoly levy, will embarrass the leadership, which tomorrow launches the "Road to Manifesto" policy document, as it will contain references to the levy.

Excluding some companies will not necessarily upset the overall aim of raising £3bn, since the burden could be spread across the other companies caught in the net.

One analyst at Merrill Lynch, the City investment bank, pointed out that as the Labour party had not released a formula for the tax, it was impossible to gauge how individual companies will be affected.

It was possible, she said, for Mr Brown to raise his £3bn, although his room for manoeuvre would be impaired.

Any softening of the stance towards British Gas is bound to provoke a hostile response from the left of the Labour Party, for whom the company is a symbol of "fat cat" capitalism. The exclusion of the two Scottish companies would lead to criticism that Labour is exhibiting one law for North of the Border and another for the South.

British Gas has argued that as it is the target of an aggressive pricing review from Ofgas, the industry regulator, which would hit its profits, it should not have to suffer a further onslaught from a new Labour government.

The Scottish companies have claimed that they were not sold as cheaply as their English and Welsh counterparts and have been subjected to a tighter regulatory regime.

A British Gas spokesman said yesterday that the issue of the windfall tax had been raised with the Labour front-bench. "There has been a process of discussion over the pricing review - it would be unrealistic if other subjects did not arise," he described the talks as "informal".

Scottish and Scottish Power have also been pressing their case for exemption. "Labour recognises the Scottish companies do have different backgrounds to the English ones," said a spokesman for Scottish Hydro. His company made profits last year of £159m and Scottish Power made £404m, but both feel they may avoid a windfall tax.

"It is nothing to do with benign fatherly treatment of the home country," said the Hydro

executive, referring to the Scottish roots of many of Labour's Shadow Cabinet, "but to do with sound economic grounds."

The Scottish Hydro spokesman claimed the English electricity companies were sold off cheaper than their Scottish counterparts. Some of the English companies have seen their share prices soar from £2.40 to £10, while the Scots have gone from £2.40 to £3. "We are not making super-profits like the English utilities," said the Hydro official, "which is why Labour could well exempt us from the windfall tax". He added: "We have been making them aware of the situation."

Ian Russell, finance director of Scottish Power, was quoted recently in a local Scottish newspaper saying: "Our judgment is that there will be a windfall tax but our base case on its impact on us, after discussions with Labour politicians, is conservative."

A utilities analyst at NatWest Securities said: "Scottish Power and Hydro believe they may be exempt." He added that "the market is assuming British Gas does not get hit." British Gas's current share price, he claimed, took account of it avoiding the windfall penalty.

John Battle, Labour's energy spokesman, maintained the tax would apply to all companies. "It is there for all utilities - that is what we've said and we're sticking with it."

A spokesman for Mr Brown was more circumspect. "It would be crazy if I said we will include or exclude anyone. In government we will talk about the situation," he said. Until then, "we will not say one way or the other" adding that names of companies which may be excluded was "pure speculation".



Women sold on the Internet for sex

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

The Internet is being used to market women for sex in an "unprecedented" way, according to a psychologist who has carried out a detailed investigation of trafficking of women on the World Wide Web.

Users can browse through catalogues of mail-order brides from Asia and Eastern Europe; select guides to the best prostitutes on offer in capitals around the world; and swap information on where to buy preteen girls and what price to pay.

Dr Donna Hughes, a lecturer in women's studies at Bradford University, said she was "amazed and appalled" at how quickly the global sex industry had seized the opportunities offered to it by the Net. "There is often very detailed information being given, telephone numbers and names of people to contact in cities in more than 40 countries in order to procure women," she said.

One site on the Web amounted to an "etiquette guide" for first-time visitors to a brothel, she said, outlining how to behave, how to pay the bar bill,

and how to approach a woman for sex.

The findings of Dr Hughes' one-year investigation, presented at a conference on women's research into pornography in Bristol yesterday, included detailed descriptions of what men had done to the women they had bought.

"These were actual accounts not fantasies," Dr Hughes said. "The amount of detail included did not come out of their imagination. There were the names of pimps selling underage girls and where to find young girls available for sex."

The Mail Order Brides catalogue on the Net included pictures of the women, their weight, height and bust measurements, and highlighted their domestic skills.

Women from the Philippines, Costa Rica, Eastern Europe, and South America, were popular candidates. Dr Hughes said. The personal details usually appeared with the women's permission and her address would be sold by a "middle man" for correspondence with a prospective buyer. Tours could also be arranged for buyers to meet all the women they had

written to, so they could choose the most suitable wife.

"There are wife-seeking tours when men can meet lots of women, have sex with as many as they want, and then choose one for a wife," Dr Hughes said. The women were very vulnerable because they believed that a life in the West is preferable to their own existence. Dr Hughes said there was evidence from Australia of "serial sponsorship", in which men buy one bride, take her home but drop her after a while, and then returns to pick another wife, leaving the first destitute.

QUICKLY

Legal aid shake-up
Plans for a radical shake-up of legal aid were launched in a Government White Paper yesterday in a bid to stem the spiralling £1.4bn bill and stop the financing of undeserving cases by the taxpayer. Page 4

Island dreams
The Isle of Wight is expected to call for autonomy and push to be recognised as a freeport and tax haven. Page 5

Contraceptive 'killed'
A contraceptive implant hailed as the perfect method of birth control has been "killed off" by lawyers, the media, and the Government's reluctance to pay for it, its manufacturers are claiming. Page 5

Hemingway dies
At the age of 19, she adorned the cover of *Time*. At 35 she posed nude for *Playboy*. Yesterday, at 41, Margaux Hemingway was dead. Page 3

CONTENTS

Section 1	15-19
BUSINESS COMMENT	11-18
GAZETTE	14
LAW REPORT	14
LEADER AND LETTERS	11
OBITUARIES	14
SHARES	19
UNIT TRUSTS	15
Section 2	
ARTS	6,7
CHESS	23
CROSSWORD	26
LISTINGS	24,25
LIVING	4,5
MONEY	12-15
TV & RADIO	27,28
WEATHER	25



SFIA School Fees and Further Education Costs



Planning for independence

With school fees rising and university grants frozen - there's never been a more important time to plan for the costs of education.

Whether you are planning in advance or require immediate help with fees, an SFIA tailor-made plan could help you manage more easily.

To find out more about how parents (and grandparents) can afford to provide for an independent education, clip and return the coupon today or telephone

Freephone 0800 282997

School Fees Insurance Agency Limited
SFIA House, 15 Forcrose Road,
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JA

Name.....
Address.....
Home telephone.....
Office telephone.....

news

Catches cut by half to save herring stock

CLARE GARNER

Britain's North Sea fishermen were dealt a new blow yesterday as the Brussels Commission slashed herring catches by half in an emergency bid to stop the stock being wiped out altogether.

Without such drastic action there was a danger of no herring fishing next year, the Commission insisted. The crisis, it said, was almost as serious as the situation in 1977 when there was a complete ban on fishing in the

North Sea for five years to allow the chronically depleted stocks to recover.

The scale of the problem only came to light in April when the latest independent scientific from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) revealed that the quantities of mature herring in the North Sea were about half the minimum level to sustain normal fishing. The industry was faced with a Hobson's Choice: either to accept the 50% reduction or face total closure

next year, and accepted "the lesser of the evils".

In a move which allowed Eurocrats to bypass EU governments, the Commission has reduced the total allowed catch of herring in the North Sea from 313,000 tonnes to 156,000 tonnes and, further north in Skagerrak and Kattegat, from 120,000 tonnes to 90,000 tonnes. The UK catch has been cut from 46,000 tonnes to 22,000 to 23,000 tonnes.

Fishermen are angry that they were informed of the cri-

sis so late in the day, long after they had set their quotas for the year in January. "The timing is atrocious. It couldn't be worse," said Jim Slater, chairman of the Scottish Pelagic Fishermen's Association. "We are now leading up to the peak time when the fish are at their finest quality for the whole 12 month period."

As it is, many will face "severe financial hardship," said Mr Slater. "From June to September many fishermen depend solely on herring for their in-

come. The loss in the market value will run to several millions."

Scottish Labour MEP Ken Collins called for compensation for the fishermen. "There are ample mechanisms for compensating EU farmers in similar circumstances. They must be applied to the fishing sector," he said.

The crisis, which comes just weeks after the fishing industry was ordered to trim its fleet by 40%, has been triggered by wholesale industrial fishing,

principally by Denmark and Norway. 80% of juvenile stock goes to such fishing, Robert Allan, chief executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation, complained. "The Sprat fishing has not been hit hard enough."

Commission officials said the onus was now on member states to ensure the new limits are followed. There are no guarantees that a ban on herring fishing has been averted but if the rapid rebuilding quota is met for the next two years the situation will be reviewed in 1998.

Beef at risk of BSE being sold in markets

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor

Meat exporters are selling BSE-risk beef to markets such as Smithfield in London for human consumption, a spokesman for the International Meat Trade Association revealed last night.

An association briefing note, circulated to MPs in advance of a short Commons debate today, says: "Beef over 30 months of age is being sold on the open market."

The meat is not caught by Government curbs on the sale of "old" beef because it was slaughtered before the critical cut-off of midnight on 28 March and had been destined for export.

However, because of the worldwide ban on British beef exports, about 4,500 tons of potentially suspect beef is now in the process of being repatriated from places as far apart as South Africa, Mauritius, Tahiti and Kuwait.

Once it has returned, there is nothing to stop exporters - who are not covered by the Government compensation programme - from selling it on, quite legally, into the human food chain.

Martin Richardson, of meat exporter First City Trading, said last night: "We have sold 20 to 30 tons over the last six weeks or so." He said there was

no way of knowing whether the meat came from cattle aged over 30 months, or whether it had been fed on suspect feed.

But the association's briefing note said it was "highly likely" that a considerable proportion of the repatriated beef stock had been fed on the meat-and-bone meal that had been identified by the Government as the prime suspect of causing bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in cattle. Use of that meal is now a criminal offence.

The note said: "This stock being available on the open market therefore not only threatens consumer confidence in the UK, but also threatens to undermine the Government's efforts to get the worldwide ban lifted."

Clearly, exporters are citing the BSE loophole as a means of putting pressure on the Government to bring them into the compensation schemes. But they argue that the sale of the meat shows up the arbitrary nature of the Government's BSE programme. As things stand, there is nothing to stop them selling the repatriated beef - which would be banned in Britain if it had been slaughtered on or after 29 March - for human consumption.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture told the Independent last night that there was

still no system in place for processing export orders to third countries. "It'll take a few weeks yet," he said. After that, applications would be judged on a country-by-country basis by the European Commission.

Jenny Burt, chairwoman of the International Meat Trade Association, said yesterday: "While the Government proclaimed [the summit in] Florence to be a success, other European nations have suggested it is worthless; that it was a face-saving measure for the British government."

"The position must be made clear. We have identified markets that want our beef. If the European Union drag their heels, the UK government must take unilateral action to ensure trading is resumed."

"If they do not, their policy on non-cooperation in Europe will be exposed as political posturing for domestic consumption rather than a real effort to save this important British industry."

In today's Commons debate, Conservative MP Graham Riddick is expected to urge the Government to take unilateral action to help the exporters if the "fiscally" agreement on third-country exports hampered out recently in Florence does not live up to the Prime Minister's expectations.

Grizzly puppet gang set to kill Fozzy

The scene is a large room in the bowels of Muppet Central Office, Gentlemen and ladies of the London press (played, in the main, by humans) occupy the chairs in the middle. Lining the walls is the entire and varied cast of *The Muppet Show*.

The lights dim and the theme song plays: "It's time for an election, it's time to fight the fight, it's time to go for the jugular on *The Muppet Show* tonight."

The platform lights go on, and the Chairman of the Party and the Deputy Prime Minister (none other than Statler and Waldorf) enter and sit down.

Muppets whoop and cheer excitedly.

Statler reads from a note: "Hello, Waldorf. What do you think of the show so far?"

Waldorf: "Well, Statler, inflation is at an all-time low; our economy is the most successful in Western Europe; house prices are rising again; and we are the envy of the world."

Statler: "So, you feel pretty good. But tell me, Waldorf, could anything go wrong?"

Waldorf: "I'm galloping you asked." (Interpretation: "Sorry, I'm glad you asked. Yes, something could go badly wrong. New Labour could be elected and Statler, they're dangerous.")

Statler: "But surely that nice Tony Blair isn't a threat to the wellbeing of the nation?"

Waldorf: "That's just where you're wrong, friend. He's more dangerous than when Harold



DAVID AARONOVITCH

Wilson stood against Sam the Bald Eagle in 1970. Worse than when Michael Foot threatened Miss Piggy in '83. Deadlier than Neil Kinnock's challenge to our very own John Major in 1992. You see, global economic competition is so intense these days - and the country so fragile - that we cannot afford even 24 hours of New Labour in power. And there's another reason why he's so dangerous."

(Pause.) "He might win."

Statler turns to the press: "I agree, Waldorf." (Holds up document.) "So look what I've got. *The Road to Ruin*, New Labour's Real Manifesto."

(Cheers and yelps from Muppets.) "The folks here, under the guidance of the Great Gwyn, have put what Labour says on the left-hand side, and what they really mean on the right. It's a hoot!" (Laughs.)

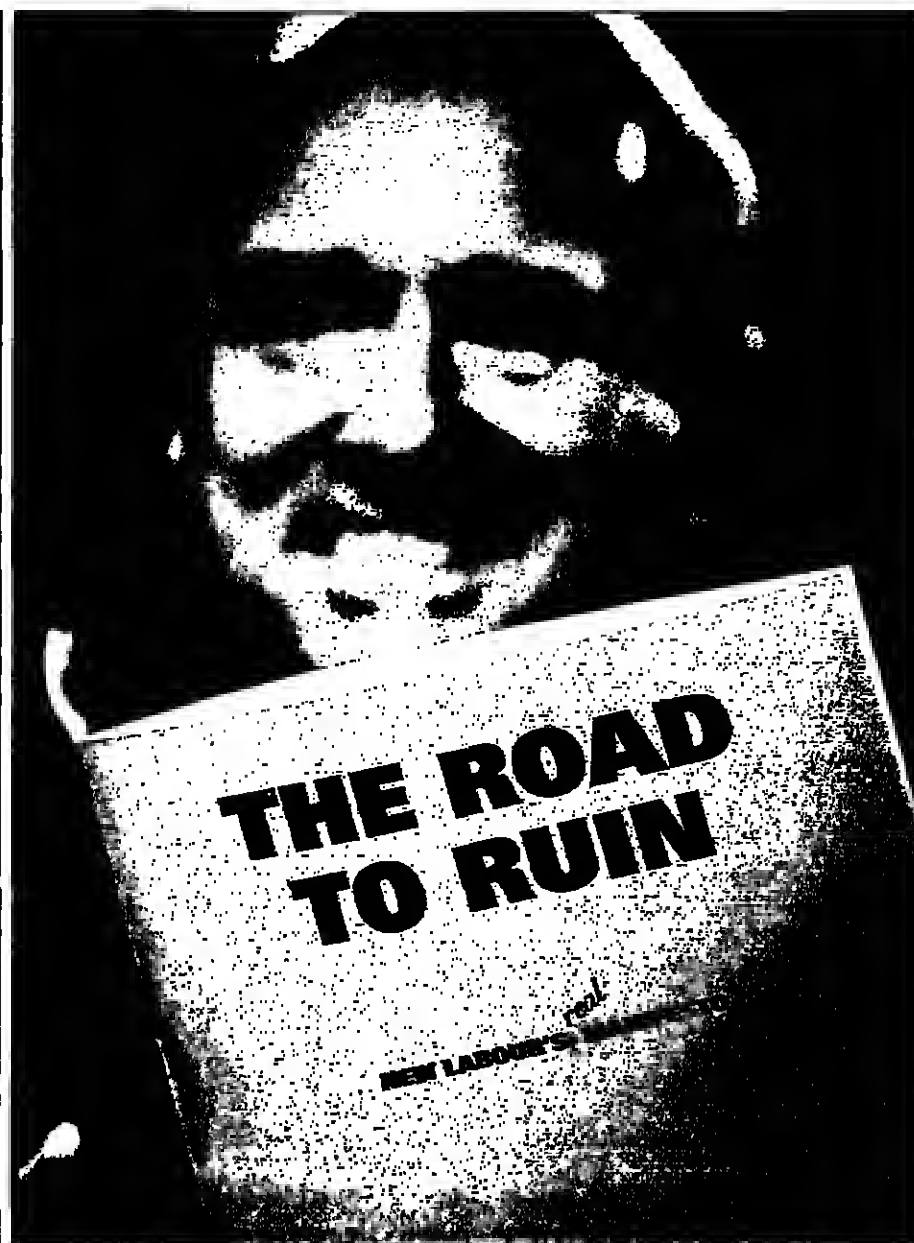
"First, let me read the introduction." (Voice cracks with merriment.) "We stand for New Communities so everyone is in bed by 10.00pm and not out shopping as they are under the

Tories..." (several Muppets collapse to the floor in laughter) "...for a New Europe in which Britain is really nice and gets its way by agreeing to everyone else's suggestions" (a doctor is called for a giggling Swedish Chef. Statler wipes his eyes.)

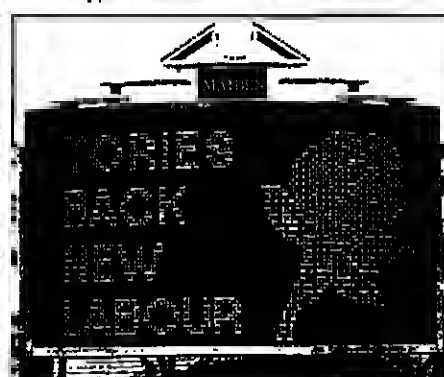
Waldorf: "And on page 18, Margaret Beckett says: 'There will be no blanket repeal of the main elements of 1980s legislation.' And look what we've put: 'We will lift the restriction on secondary picketing and return the country to its industrial relations heyday under the last Labour government.'"

Statler: "That's a good one. But I can do better. On page 24, David Blunkett argues that 'our commitment to comprehensive education cannot be a commitment to sameness.' And do you know what we printed on the right-hand side? (Takes a deep breath.) 'New Labour believes that the fundamental purpose of education is to ensure that all children turn out exactly the same! (Huge applause. Streamers are thrown and buckets of green glow fall from the ceiling. The theme tune is replayed. Lights are turned on to reveal that the audience has vanished.)

As Statler and Waldorf shamble off, a lone frog appears with a placard which reads: "Next week's show: *Muppets in Opposition*, featuring special guest John Redwood. Venue: here in the bunker"



On the attack: Tory chairman Brian MaWhinney launches an attack on Labour's new policies. Counter-attack Labour spread their message by neon in London's Piccadilly



Blair is worse than Foot says Heseltine

ANTHONY BEVINS

Tony Blair poses a greater threat to the country than either Michael Foot or Neil Kinnock, the Tories' left-wing bogymen of the 1980s, Michael Heseltine said yesterday.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the world had changed since Mr Foot and Mr Kinnock had led the Labour Party; the pace of international competition meant that Britain could not afford to make mistakes, or waste time, with the kind of policies Mr Blair would attempt to introduce.

That, he said, "is one way, I think at the heart of the matter, in which Tony Blair is more dangerous than the regimes represented by Michael Foot and Neil Kinnock."

Opening a new campaign under the slogan, New Labour, New Danger, Brian MaWhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, urged the voters to safeguard Tory economic success from the dangerous depredations of New Labour.

He told a London press conference that there was no question of a change of Tory strategy: the negative attack on the new dangers posed by Mr Blair would be accompanied by the continuing positive message of Government success in reviving the feel-good factor.

Mr Blair told a meeting of Labour's national executive that it was a most foolish strategy, "the greatest political retreat of modern times".

Earlier, Mr MaWhinney and Mr Heseltine published a 24,000-word Tory version of the outline 10,000-word manifesto to be published by Labour tomorrow, under working title, *The Road to the Manifesto*.

The Conservative version, *The Road to Ruin*, was a heady mix of selective quotation, heavy sarcasm and student rag parody, with a weller of "pledges" allegedly based on statements made by Labour.

It included: "Everybody has a stake in everybody else's property. There must therefore be a right to roam over it." "Peo-

ple from all around the world should be allowed to stay as long as they want in Britain at the taxpayer's expense." "New Labour's economic policies will abolish unemployment"; and "It may be that our current endorsement of a single currency would be a sufficient mandate to abolish the pound after a general election."

Accusing Mr Blair of a "cynical pursuit of power", Mr MaWhinney said in an introduction to the document: "If some of the proposals seem ridiculous, remember that they are all drawn from official New Labour sources. It would be funny if it were not so serious."

Mr MaWhinney said the document presented a devastating picture of what life would be like under Labour. "Under new Labour, we would have a new set of taxes. Under New Labour, we would have a new constitution with another layer of government, fragmentation of the United Kingdom and unelected judges wielding ultimate political power."

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Legal action against a privatised water company was launched yesterday over allegations that it supplied water unfit for human consumption. South West Water is accused of providing contaminated water to areas of south Devon in August and September 1995. It is alleged that the water from SWW's treatment works in Littlehampton, Devon, caused an outbreak of the illness cryptosporidiosis, which caused stomach upsets, severe abdominal pain and diarrhoea to 575 people in the area.

The case, brought by John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, will come before Newton Abbey magistrates on 4 August. It follows investigations by the Drinking Water Inspectorate, whose report will be published after the hearing.

In today's 24-hour Tube strikes, London Underground hopes to operate more than one-third of routes - "slightly better" than during last week's day-long stoppage. The only services at a standstill will be the City & Hammersmith and Circle lines. Talks over a reduced working week broke down this week and Aslef, the train drivers' union, plans to go ahead with further strikes next Monday and on 16 July. Members of the RMT transport union, which represents most other Tube employees, are voting on taking their own action over time off.

The British Airline Pilots' Association is today expected to announce a Yes vote in a ballot on action among more than 3,000 members of British Airways flight crew in a pay dispute, and representatives of the Communication Workers' Union meet in London to assess the latest offer by Royal Mail to end a conflict over wages and productivity. *Barrie Clement*

The Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom yesterday launched a manifesto to demand proper media regulation and claimed the grip of the giant corporations was threatening democracy. It said the long-held principle that media diversity was important for healthy democratic debate had been abandoned by government, and argued the way forward was now through tougher regulation. The campaign called for a new Media Commission to impose effective controls on cross-media ownership in publishing and broadcasting and a new Media Consumers' Council to protect and enhance consumer interests. *Louise Jury*

A doctor's writing led to the death of a woman after she was injected with a lethal dose of painkillers when the prescription was misread, an inquest jury in Westminster was told yesterday. Carole Burwash, 53, had gone to the Princess Grace Hospital, central London, on 18 October last year for a hysterectomy. Consultant anaesthetist Dr Gök Lim had prescribed diamorphine 3mg, but resident medical officer Dr Richard Hornbrook had administered 30mg. The coroner Dr Paul Knappman criticised the two doctors and said the death was the result of errors. A verdict of accidental death was returned.

MPs' car mileage claims could be drastically cut as part of a deal to damp down a public outcry if they vote for an inflation-busting pay deal next month. There has been speculation that the Senior Salaries Review Body report, to be published tomorrow, will recommend an increase of up to 30 per cent in MPs' pay of £34,085, but some MPs believe they will have to sacrifice the higher-rate allowance of 72.2p a mile for the first 20,000 miles in cars over £30,000. In evidence to the review body, Labour MP Chris Mullin said the allowance was too generous, discriminated in favour of large cars and allowed an unlimited number of trips between constituencies and Westminster. *Anthony Bevins*

A campaign to curb the rise in child smokers was launched yesterday. Children as young as 12 are becoming regular smokers and it is estimated that one in four 15-year-olds is addicted. More than 60 medical, health, consumer and children's organisations and charities have joined together to shame the Government in to action against young smokers with their national campaign, "Cashing In On Children Smoking". They are calling on the Government to spend some of the £108m it collects every year in taxation from cigarettes sold illegally to under-16s to warn children of the dangers of smoking.

The jury in the trial of Howard Hughes for the murder of seven-year-old Sophie Hook was told yesterday by the accused man's father how his son confessed to him that he had murdered the girl. Gerald Hughes revealed he had since cut off all contact with his only son because he knew Sophie's family and the confession had "shattered" him. Hughes, 31, of Colwyn Bay, North Wales, denies the double rape and murder of Sophie - abducted from a tent in her uncle's garden in Llandudno last July. But Chester Crown Court was told he admitted the murder to his father when he visited him at the police station after several days of questioning. He said his son had been a disappointment and had been in trouble with the police as a teenager. He said he was "emotionally insecure", "slow" and dyslexic and had been sent to a school in Derbyshire "for naughty boys". The case continues today.

A charge of serious professional misconduct against two doctors who were said to have agreed not to tell a patient she was dying from breast cancer was yesterday dismissed by the General Medical Council. GP Alan White told the GMC that he was told by Christopher Simpson, 47, that he and Dr James Ferguson, 59, had decided not to reveal to Carol Ann Clark, 32, of Ayr, that benign biopsies carried out on her had been "misinterpreted", and that she was terminally ill. Mrs Clark died in August 1994. Dr White said he "felt uncomfortable" knowing something that had not been passed on to one of his patients, although he had agreed that to tell her would have no effect on treatment.

Four of Britain's rarest birds have been killed in their nest just three days after a watch was called off because they were believed to be safe. Last year two eggs, each worth around £3,000 on the black market, were stolen from the same Montagu's barblers' nest at Black Gut Bottom, Hampshire and the this year Forestry Commission had mounted its biggest 24-hour protection operation in the New Forest. Last year there were only seven breeding pairs of Montagu's barblers in Britain.

The Eurovision Song Contest will be staged in Ireland by the state-backed RTE broadcasting network next year it was confirmed yesterday. The network secured the right to host the annual television extravaganza when the Irish entry won the competition for a record fourth time in five years in May, but there had been doubts on economic grounds about RTE's plans to go ahead with the event.

Calais begins with sea...

RELAX and just cruise across from Dover to Calais - the shortest sea route to France. Large, luxurious car ferries with shops, restaurants and entertainment on board, plus hovercraft, provide rapid, comfortable crossings with a departure every thirty minutes. Fast on and off loading on both sides of the Channel helps to speed your journey. Instant motorway access from Calais port provides an open door to the entire European motorway network.



For a shopping day, a relaxing stay or for immediate access to motorway...

Calais
...a short cruise away.

DOVER/CALAIS
OVER 140 CROSSINGS DAILY
BY P&O EUROPEAN FERRIES, STENA LINE,
SEAFRANCE & HOVERFERRY.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTIONS	
Austria ... £54.00	Norway ... £54.00
Belgium ... £54.00	Poland ... £54.00
Canada ... £54.00	Portugal ... £54.00
Denmark ... £54.00	Spain ... £54.00
France ... £54.00	Sweden ... £54.00
Germany ... £54.00	Switzerland ... £54.00
Greece ... £54.00	USA ... £54.00
Ireland ... £54.00	
Italy ... £54.00	
Japan ... £54.00	
Netherlands ... £54.00	
Norway ... £54.00	
Poland ... £54.00	
Portugal ... £54.00	
Spain ... £54.00	
Sweden ... £54.00	
Switzerland ... £54.00	
USA ... £54.00	

هكذا من الاصل

news

Legal aid shake-up cuts costs but stirs a storm

Consumer groups protest that poor will have to pay more.

Patricia Wynn Davies reports

Proposals to make the poorest people in society contribute more to the cost of their legal aid cases - double in some instances - and for the introduction, for the first time, of cash-limited budgets provoked a wave of criticism from legal aid consumers and consumer groups yesterday.

The plans are part of the most radical shake-up of legal aid for nearly half a century, launched in a Government White Paper yesterday in a bid to stem the spiralling £1.4bn bill and stop the financing of undeserving cases by the taxpayer.

Unveiling the long-awaited paper, Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, declared that the public saw legal aid as "wasteful in supporting too many weak and undeserving cases; as over-priced, with taxpayers on moderate incomes, who would not qualify for legal aid if they sought it, paying what appear to them to be huge lawyers' fees; and as unfair to the opponents of legally aided people who too often feel that they have had to give in on cases that they would have a good chance of winning."

The rich and infamous who had assistance



Dominic Trustad: A trust fund beneficiary, but got £200,000 to pursue 'hopeless' case against lawyers over uncle's will.



Andreas Pavel: A German, ran up £500,000 attempting to prove that he, not Sony, invented the Walkman.



Ian Brady: Moors murderer, got aid to take Press Complaints Commission to High Court over privacy ruling.



Steve Smith: A cricketer, got aid to sue the NHS.

aid clients will risk a lifetime of debt if they lose. For many people it will be impossible to enforce or defend their legal rights."

Subject to details being worked out in regulations, the paper proposes a new test for weeding out unmeritorious claims based on whether a case "deserves" a share of the public funds available. The emphasis on priorities and resources is likely to mean that more foreigners are excluded.

Cases that have triggered the clampdown on "undeserving" cases include the granting of aid to ex-RAF officer Simon Foster to try to force his health authority to give him a sex change, to Jawad Hashim, a former aide to Saddam Hussein, who got £4m to defend a £34m fraud case brought by the Arab Monetary Fund. It emerged this week that cancer patient Cyril Smith has been given aid to sue the NHS.

The proposed new mechanism for excluding unmeritorious claims will increase the chances of the Paper securing a legislative slot in this autumn's Queen's Speech.

But Paul Boateng, Labour's legal affairs spokesman, said Labour rejected a "crude, budget-capping" approach, adding: "These Treasury-driven proposals cut back on justice for those currently in receipt of legal aid."

Comment, page 13

The Government's insistence that the system is weighted too heavily in favour of the assisted person has led to a radical proposal for all applicants - even those on income support and free legal aid without a contribution - to pay a £10 or £20 minimum fee for issuing or defending most types of civil court proceedings and a new rule making contributions to continue to be made until the cost of the case has been met. The current rule that protects unsuccessful aided litigants from paying their opponents cost would also go, exposing them to having legal fees clawed back over a period of years.

In criminal cases, defendants

would still receive free legal advice at a police station and for their first appearance at a magistrates' court, and people on benefit would continue to qualify for free help and representation in the early stages of a case. But all other defendants on legal aid who need a lawyer would pay a fixed-rate sum on their second court appearance and in longer cases would be subjected, as at present, to detailed means tests.

Amid a plethora of protests against the proposals, the National Consumer Council accused the Government of planning "unsubstantiated and dangerous" changes on the "wrong assumption that frivolous people were queuing up to

bring trivial cases.

Roger Smith, chairman of the Legal Action Group, the legal aid campaigning organisation, said: "Access to justice will be rationed, with people having to compete for funds within a fixed budget. They will have to pay increased contributions towards the cost of their case. Unsuccessful litigants will be liable to pay the costs of the other side. In an average case their total liability could be £5,000, to be paid off long after the case has ended."

Derek Sands, chairman of the Law Society's courts and legal services committee, said: "Virtually no-one will have their access to justice improved as a result of these proposals. Legal

NHS hospital league tables: Better measures of performance to be devised



What are the best measures of clinical standards? Numbers of operations performed? Success rates? Waiting time in out-patients? Photograph: Mike Moore

Operation success rates to be revealed

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

Measures of the quality of hospital treatment could begin next year, Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, indicated yesterday. His comments followed publication of the latest league tables of hospital performance, to the usual barrage of criticism that they measure quantity rather than quality.

Pilot studies on the success rate of different types of operation and treatment should be completed late this year, Mr Dorrell said. "We shall then consider how best to use the results to inform the public about the clinical standards achieved." This will be subject to the pilots' establishing that sensible measures of clinical performance can be produced.

Measures used include waiting time for in-patient and out-patient appointments, day surgery rates, and operations cancelled and not performed within a month. Forty-two per cent of hospitals scored five stars, a near 25 per cent increase, up from 29 per cent two years ago. A general improvement was marked by a small overall increase in the number of operations not performed within a month of cancellation.

Jim Johnson, chairman of the British Medical Association's consultants committee, protested that the tables could be misleading. "It is nonsense to

say a hospital gets five stars when a nurse sees 95 per cent of patients within five minutes of arriving at casualty, if they then wait six hours to be actually treated."

Mr Dorrell, however, argued that it was entirely right that the urgency with which a patient should be seen was assessed as soon as they reached hospital. He added: "We would like to publish more about clinical success rates." A dozen potential measures are being examined, including deaths within a month of operation, surgical wound infection rates, deaths in hospital after heart attacks, and damage to the brain or other organs following surgery.

The measures are being developed in conjunction with the Joint Consultants Committee, which represents the medical Royal Colleges and the British Medical Association. Professor Sir Norman Brouse, its chairman, said the committee had no objection to publishing clinical outcomes "provided they mean something". The committee would resist publication of death rates, as has been done in Scotland. "But we are looking for four or five conditions or problems we could focus on, where we could make real comparisons."

Mr Johnson, however, argued that clinical indicators were "even more difficult" than the present ones. In his region, for example, one hospital had been found to have twice the

death rate compared to another for aortic aneurysm - weakening of the main artery wall, which can lead to rupture. But one was a teaching hospital taking less urgent cases for specialist care, while the other was a district general hospital taking emergencies. Once that was allowed for the difference in death rates disappeared.

There are also concerns within the Department of Health that focusing on only one or two clinical indicators could distort treatment, as hospitals strive to achieve high ratings on the few indicators that are measured.

Yesterday's tables show no hospital is universally good or bad, but Halton Hospital on Merseyside scored the highest proportion of five-star ratings for the second year running, with 39 out of 52. Other good performers included the South Manchester Hospitals, East Gloucestershire NHS Trust, Epsom, Central Middlesex, the Central Nottinghamshire Trust and Walton Hospital, a community trust in Chesterfield.

In general, big city hospitals, including some famous teaching hospitals, tended to fare worse than smaller units, a feature, Mr Dorrell said, of their being "the biggest management challenges".

National and regional versions of the tables are available by calling 0800 555777, or on the Internet at <http://www.open.gov.uk/doi/tables96.htm>.

Leading article, page 11

Job agency to oppose Labour 'ageism' law

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

A row erupted yesterday over Labour's plan to outlaw "ageism" as employment agencies agreed to exclude any mention of age in job advertisements.

While the Labour Party reiterated its intention to introduce a law banning age discrimination, a leading British recruitment firm declared outright opposition to legislation.

Alec Reed, chairman of Reed Personnel Services, said he opposed more recruitment law and argued skill shortages were growing so fast that the problem would "solve itself".

However, Ian McCartney, Labour's employment spokesman, said Labour's plans were "focusing minds" throughout industry. There was still a need to outlaw age discrimination, just as previous statute had banned sexual and racial prejudice.

"The issue is not sorting itself out. It's one of the biggest post-hags the Labour Party gets. A new law will underpin cultural change."

The strong difference of opinion emerged as agencies covering 90 per cent of the recruitment market refused to handle advertisements where clients insisted on age limits.

The initiative was announced at a conference sponsored by the Carnegie Third Age Programme which campaigns on behalf of active over-50s who may have retired, but who can still make a contribution to the economy and society.

The announcement by staff agencies comes in the wake of growing pressure from interest groups, but also amid a mounting realisation among employers that democratic trends will force them to take on older workers.

Richard Goldie, chief executive of the Macmillan Davies Agency, said companies needed to realise that during the next decade the number of job seekers over the age of 35 would rise, while those under the age of 34 would fall.

Anne Riley, chief executive of Austin Knight, another leading recruitment firm, said the initiative coincided with improving business confidence. "There is more recruitment but there are signs of skill shortages in information technology. To fill these vacancies, employers will have to recognise that age is no longer a legitimate factor in recruitment."

Richard Worsley, director of the programme, said that winning the support of recruitment advertising agencies would be a "crucial turning point in exposing the fallacy that anyone can tell from a person's age whether they have what it takes to employ them".



BREITLING

1884



CHRONOMAT

At a time when instruments unerringly cope with Mach 1 flight data, continued improvements to the mechanical chronograph simply underscore that there's more to time than technology. A movement's intricate beauty or a hand-polished case's lustrous gleam do put technological progress in a broader perspective.

Like the *Concord*, the world's first but surely not last supersonic transport, CHRONOMATS draw time and space ever closer with aesthetic excellence as well as outstanding technical performance.

GOLD SMITHS WALKER & HALL

THE MARK OF A FINE JEWELLER

Breitling Watches are available at selected branches of the Goldsmiths Group, one of the country's leading quality retail jewellers with over 100 branches nationwide.

ABERDEEN • BRIGHTON • CAMBRIDGE • CANTERBURY • CHELMSFORD • DERBY • GLASGOW • LEAMINGTON SPA • LEEDS

LEICESTER • LONDON • MAIDENHEAD • NEWCASTLE • OXFORD • READING • THURROCK • WIMBLEDON

For details of your nearest stockist call FREE on 0800 220733

INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS

0800 220733

politics

Taxpayer to foot bill for MoD houses sale

Confidential revelations give new twist to allegations of 'Get Portillo' campaign. Colin Brown reports

The allegations of a "get Portillo" campaign last night took a fresh twist after it was disclosed that the taxpayer will have to pay an undisclosed sweetener to a foreign company for the sale of MoD houses.

Labour sources said they had been given confidential information which will further undermine the efforts by the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, to avert a Commons Tory rebellion over the plan.

But there is a widespread feeling among Tory MPs that Mr Portillo's hopes of a long-term bid for the leadership have been damaged by the battle over MOD houses.

Some of Mr Portillo's supporters believe there has been a dirty tricks campaign to discredit him, possibly by others on the right, or armed forces sources who dislike his style of leadership at the MOD.

There were claims that he wanted to sell off Admiralty Arch, which proved unfounded, and a whispering campaign has been running against his plans for the sale of the houses.

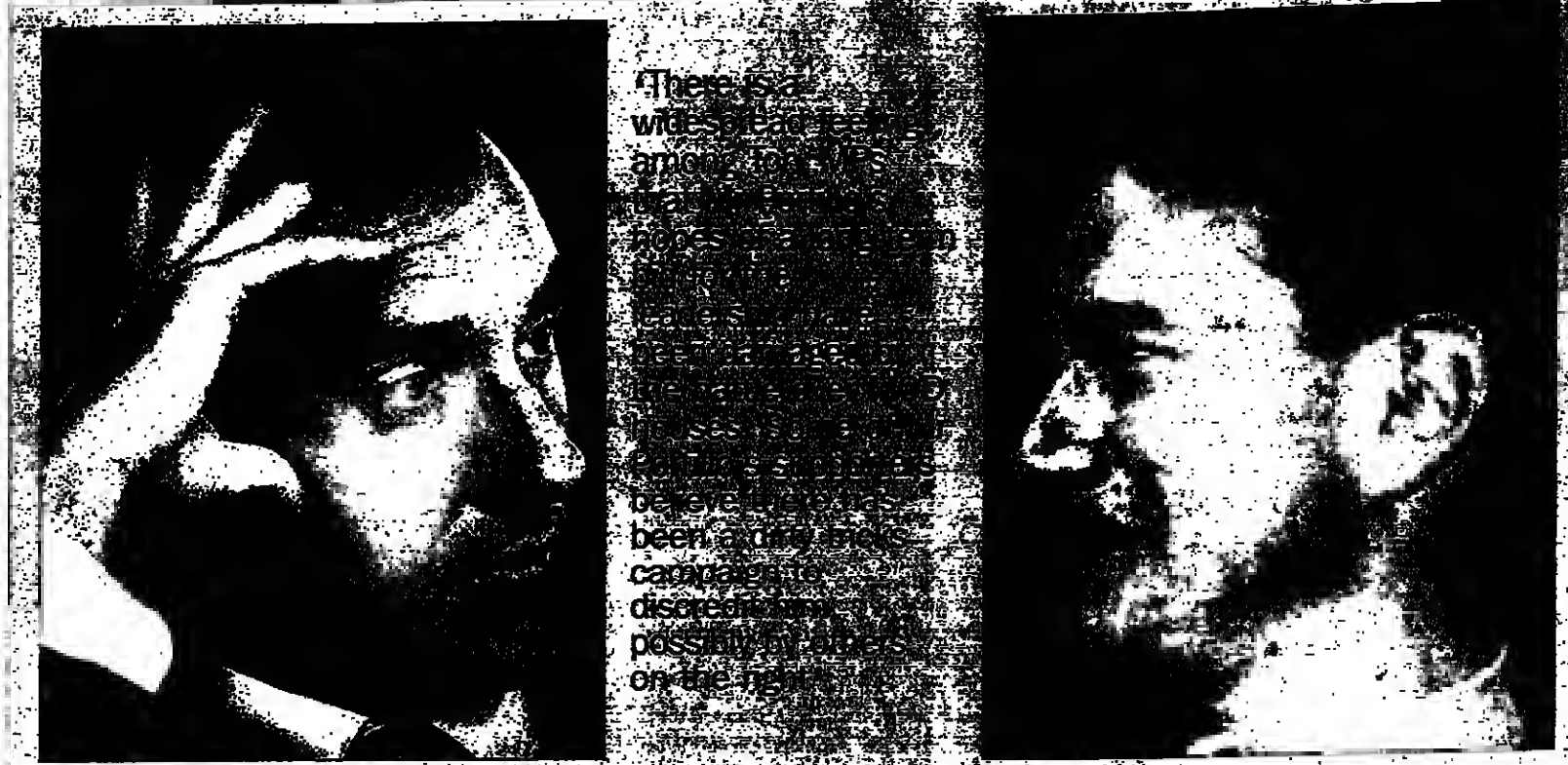
Tony Blair, the Labour leader, sensing blood, clashed with John Major again over the issue during Prime Minister's question time, warning that it would be a bad deal for the taxpayer.

The leaking of new details about the sale of the houses is certain to intensify the battle between Mr Portillo and supporters of John Redwood, who are strongly opposed to the sale.

The senior Labour sources have been informed that all the four final bidders for the homes are foreign buyers. They are: the Japanese Nomura Bank, the Dutch bank ING Barings, and two American companies, Morgan Stanley and Lehman Brothers.

Mr Portillo has given assurances that a foreign buyer will have no effect on security on the bases, which has been heightened because of the renewed IRA bombing campaign and the Osnabruck mortar attack. But backbenchers are uneasy at MOD houses.

A 20-page glossy brochure for



Rivals for power: John Redwood (left) and Michael Portillo (right) may become head to head contenders for the Tory party leadership

the sale, which has been circulating in the City among potential bidders, guarantees that the buyer will be paid by the MOD a specified amount for

each year of the 25 year lease or an aggregate rent, whichever is the higher.

The MoD confirmed last night that the taxpayer will pay

the difference between the sum guaranteed to the buyer and the rents collected by the MOD from the servicemen and women but it refused to disclose

how much that sum will be.

The Labour sources have learned that bidders are being told they will get a guaranteed rental which will be enough to

service a debt of up to £950 million.

In addition, they will be expected to inject equity of around £600-700 million on

which they will get a return of about 10 to 12 per cent, about twice the level of current base rates.

Labour sources estimated that the returns could amount to £165 million a year, which could mean that the successful bidder will have met the purchase price for the homes before half of the lease has expired. In addition, the buyer will get houses released for sale.

David Clark, the Labour's defence spokesman, said: "It's bad for the taxpayer and it's bad for the service men and women."

An MoD spokesman said: "Our first priority is to the servicemen and women. Our second priority is to the taxpayer. This will be a good deal for the taxpayer."

However, he insisted that the details of the rent to be paid to the buyer by the Government were confidential and still under negotiation.

It is certain that the deal will be closely examined by the Public Accounts Committee after it has gone through. The cross-party Commons select committee on defence, chaired by Tory MP Michael Colvin, is expected to report shortly in Mr Portillo's favour.

NATIONWIDE MORTGAGES

A GUIDE TO WINNING



fig. 7 PLAYING AN ACE

Special rates for existing customers. Advantage you.

Minimum Deposit	Discounted Rate in Year 1	APR (Variable)
25%	1.69%	1.7%
15%	2.19%	2.2%
5%	2.69%	2.8%

Discounted rates only available to existing Nationwide borrowers moving home.

an extra £50 if your application comes in before 31st July. Of course we also serve some pretty good deals to new customers too. You'll then find that at Nationwide our rates are consistently competitive. So for a smashing mortgage pop into your local Nationwide or call us on 0800 30 20 10 (quoting ref.PZ67).

At Nationwide we reserve some of our best one year discounted rates for existing borrowers who are moving house; your loyalty nets you some extra good deals. But the advantage doesn't end at the rates. A cashback offer of up to £790 including a refund of your application fee, gives you a fantastic return. On top of this, you'll get

In tune with people

Nationwide
THE BUILDING SOCIETY.

Find us on the Internet at <http://www.nationwide.co.uk>

Rates correct as time of going to press. Discount are off our standard variable rate. Rates advertised are compared to our other one year discounted rates currently available. Offers subject to availability. Typical example assumes existing borrowers take a variable rate of 1.69% after a 5.00% discount in year 1 off our current standard variable rate of 6.74% APR (variable). A couple (male and female, non-smokers, aged 25, applying for a £50,000 Endowment Mortgage over 25 years on a purchase price of £25,000 (loan term of 40%). 300 monthly payments of £172.54, net of MARS at 15%. APR 6.74% (variable). Total Amount Payable will be £79,840, which includes 300 mortgage and endowment payments, solicitor's mortgage costs of £100 excluding VAT (assumes same solicitor fees for both of us) and redemption fees of £40. A typical monthly endowment premium is £87 (variable). APRs are based on 1 year discount applying for the term of the mortgage. In practice, after the discount rate period, our then current variable interest rate will apply. Payments must be made by Direct Debit or Post-Accounts transfer for the term of the discount. Early redemption fees charged if you repay your mortgage or transfer to another offer during the first five years. For full details see relevant literature. Cashback includes an application for refund of up to £290 and a £50 bonus available if an application is made by 31st July 1997 and completion occurs by 31st January 1997, paid after completion. Cashback and Bonus must be repaid if you redraw or transfer your mortgage in the first 5 years. Mortgages are subject to status and security. Available to those aged 18 or over only. For loans exceeding 75% of the purchase price or valuation, whichever is the lower, an additional charge will be made. Please note that for various legal, regulatory and customer service requirements, your telephone call will be recorded. Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide Life Limited and Nationwide Unit Trust Managers Limited represent only the Nationwide Marketing Group, which is regulated by the Financial Services Authority for life assurance, pensions and unit trust products. Nationwide Unit Trust Managers Limited is also regulated by HMRC. Nationwide telephone Customer Advisors are unconnected from the Nationwide Marketing Group. Where questions available on request from Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide Home, Poplar Way, Swindon SN36 1NW. Nationwide is a member of the Building Societies Ombudsman Scheme and subscribes to the Code of Banking Practice.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

Police unit to tackle organised gangsters

JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

A new national crime unit with more than 1,700 officers is to be set up to tackle drug traffickers and other organised gangsters, it was announced yesterday.

The unit will be split into two sections, an operational Crime Squad, made up of existing Regional Crime Squads members, and an intelligence gathering wing, comprising the National Criminal Intelligence Service and some MI5 officers.

Details of the proposed crime unit, the existence of which was revealed in the *Independent*, were announced yesterday by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, at the Association of Chief Police Officers' summer conference in Manchester.

Mr Howard disclosed that two new "service authorities", similar to the existing police authorities, will be set up to oversee the national squad, which will cover England and Wales.

However he did not offer any new money for the unit, arguing that existing budgets for NCIS and Regional Crime Squads ought to be enough.

The six regional crime squads now have 1,421 officers and 229 civilian staff, while NCIS has 242 police officers, two members of MI5, 44 customs personnel and 250 civilian staff.

Mr Howard is expected to introduce a crime Bill in the autumn to include the proposals for the two squads. Under

the plans, the Home Office would lose responsibility for NCIS, which would become an independent force.

Police chiefs believe a dedicated unit will be an important development in the fight against organised crime and drug dealing, whose influence is growing in Britain. Mr Howard said: "Organised crime is the multi-million-pound industry which puts heroin on our streets, threatens the integrity of our financial centres through fraud and money laundering and exploits human misery."

"We need a national response to threats on a national scale."

Mr Howard said an independent commissioner would oversee the use of police phone taps and bugging and investigate complaints resulting from covert surveillance. Sir James Sharples, president of ACPO, welcomed the new crime squad, which his organisation has been closely involved in establishing.

■ New laws to allow the police to take out civil actions to seize the assets of suspected organised criminals should be examined, one of the country's most senior detectives said yesterday. Commander Roy Penrose, national co-ordinator of the Regional Crime Squads, told the ACPO conference that major criminals were hiding behind middlemen to stop courts confiscating illegally obtained money. Under existing British law the police must obtain a relevant conviction before they can attempt to seize any assets.

Photo-driving licence 'a voluntary ID card'

New driving licences with photographs should be used as a voluntary identity card, MPs said yesterday.

However, the influential Home Affairs select committee ruled out any move to introduce a compulsory national ID card.

At the launch of the committee's report, MPs said they were influenced by arguments submitted by the police, who did not want the card to be compulsory because it might alienate them from the public.

The committee favoured a card that could be used as a

proof of identity, combined with a driving licence and passport for use in Europe.

MPs said the benefits and convenience of the card would encourage people to participate in the scheme. Photocard driving licences are due to be introduced next year.

The committee's chairman, Sir Ivan Lawrence, said: "If 35 million people have a driving licence, then a significant proportion of those will want to have a licence plus identity card for the advantages it will bring them."

HOUSE INSURANCE

SAVE UP TO 50% or MORE

e.g. LONDON & HOME COUNTIES
£100,000 Buildings Sum Insured
Premium Only £154.00

LOWER Premiums in most Other Areas
Ring NOW to Save Money
0345 123111
All calls charged at local rate

Hill House Hammond
Putting The Cost Of Your Insurance

Musicals: Lloyd Webber says future is 'very parlous'

Shows that can't afford to go on

REBECCA FOWLER

There is no business like show business, but according to Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber the world's most successful composer claimed yesterday that the future of British musicals is "parlous", and £75 per ticket would be a realistic price for a new blockbuster musical.

Sir Andrew has, alongside Sir Cameron Mackintosh, the producer, transformed the musical into the greatest commercial force in the theatre, with productions such as *Cats*, which became the longest-running musical in the world earlier this year.

However, Sir Andrew claimed yesterday, on the eve of the opening of his latest production, *By Jeeves*, that rising production costs, audience expectations, and the burden placed on commercial productions by subsidised theatre was placing an unrealistic strain on the world of musicals.



Sir Andrew: Predicts rise to £75 a head for West End hit

He said: "Musical theatre can't sustain that. We are living in very parlous times for the future of musicals, and it's going to become increasingly difficult because commercial theatre is disadvantaged now against subsidised theatre."

Sir Andrew, who remortgaged his house 15 years ago to raise part of the £500,000 capital for *Cats*, the lavish musical adaptation of TS Eliot's poems, calculated that the same production would cost £2.5m to launch in the current climate, and it would be impossible to keep ticket prices low.

He told *Classic FM* radio: "We were £15 top price for our tickets, with a lower VAT rate. Now, if we had to open *Cats* today, to be able to keep pace and do the kind of production we did, we would have to be charging £75 a ticket."

According to Sir Andrew, both he and Sir Cameron, who will launch the musical adaptation of *Martin Guerre* next week, are both seriously concerned by the financial pressures on producers. He added: "It's going to be very difficult to do the kind of big musical that we've been used to."

The "angels", individuals who finance shows, would agree. Although there are rich pickings from the great British juggernauts of the musicals world, most shows lose everything.

Christopher Atkinson, one "angel", said recently: "Because of higher initial costs, it takes longer runs and fuller houses to

get back the initial investment nowadays. It also takes longer to get a decent return, even from a highly successful production."

Yet despite Sir Andrew's concerns that musicals are losing out, they are flourishing more than ever. Last year, musicals represented 62 per cent of all West End theatre audiences. In stark contrast, modern drama represented 11 per cent and classical plays 8 per cent of seats.

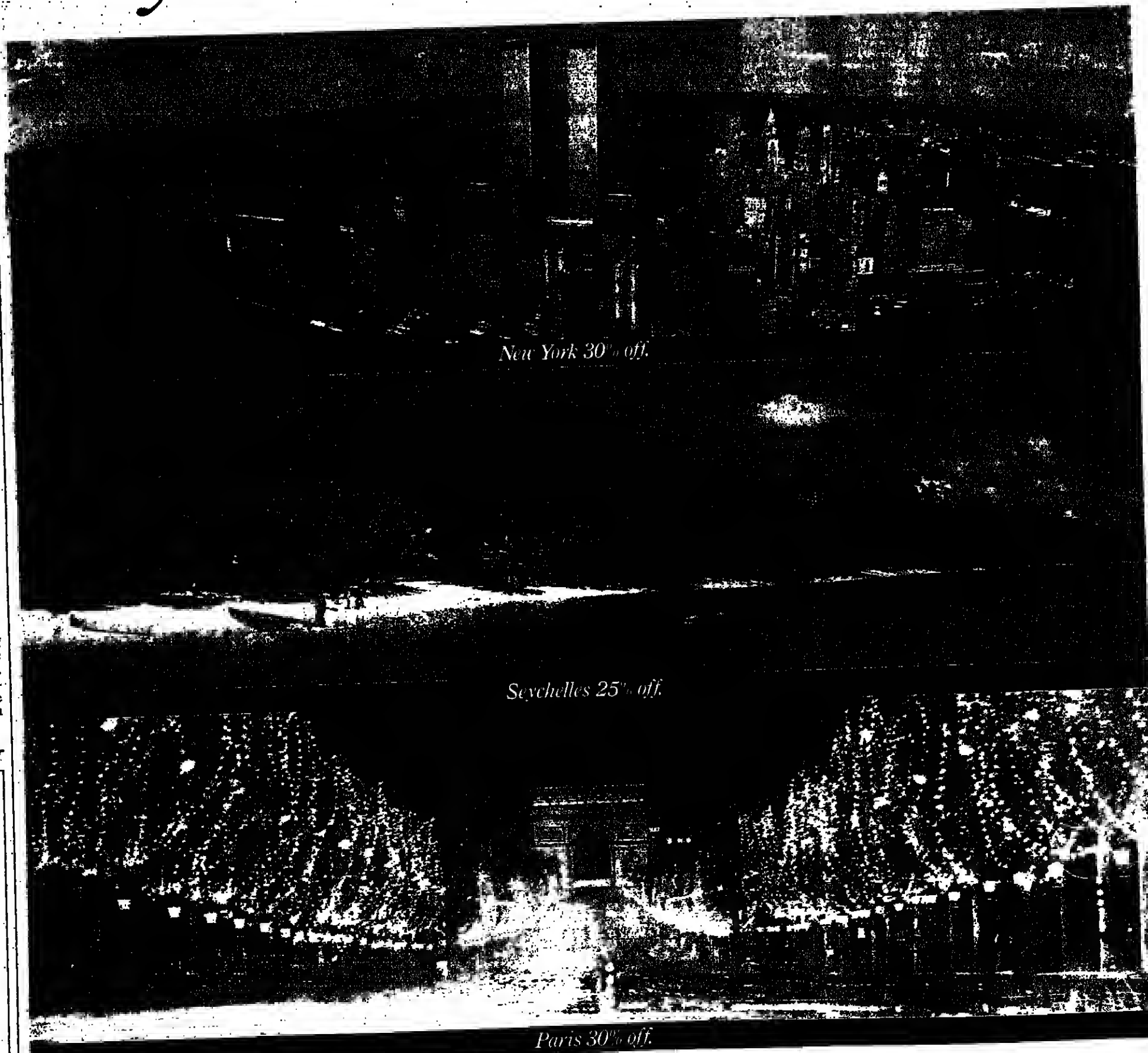
Despite his fears that ticket prices cannot keep up with production costs, the highest price to see the recent production of *Sunset Boulevard*, one of the most lavish shows in London, is £35. A top price ticket to *Cats* costs £32.50 and for the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Romeo and Juliet*, £23.50.



Display of poise: Rare dark red wax Florentine figure by Gian Bologna from the second half of the 16th century (estimated price £50-80,000) to be auctioned tomorrow in Sotheby's sale of European works of art in London, which is expected to raise £5m

Photograph: Edward Sykes

To get up to 30% off British Airways fares, BT suggest you do absolutely nothing.



New York 30% off.

Seychelles 25% off.

Paris 30% off.

Yes it's true.

If you're a BT Friends and Family member do absolutely nothing. By the 5th of August a voucher will drop through your letter box.

A voucher which could save you between 10% and 30% on British Airways international flights around the world.

And as you're entitled to buy up to four tickets, you could take your family or friends with you.

Please don't call BT or British Airways. Simply

wait for your voucher to be delivered. They're being printed right now. Please don't try and book your dream trip until your voucher arrives.

You can make bookings between August and October 1996 and the discounts are available for outward bound flights between the 7th January and 15th May 1997.

If you're not a BT Friends & Family member you can join any time until the 4th October and still get this offer.

It's free to join and you will get a 10% discount on

your five favourite telephone numbers. (One could be an international number and one a mobile number).

Call us on 0800 055 555 now.

Meanwhile, to those of you that have nothing to do but wait, you could start thinking about your favourite destination.

BT It's good to talk

Some fares may be excluded. Subject to availability and conditions. Excludes the Easter 1997-1998. 10% discount on selected flights. British Airways published fares for travel between January and May 1997. 10% discount on selected flights. Excludes the Easter 1997-1998.

First Night

Sir skimps on style, but Jeeves is in fine form

An insight into the psyche of Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber was evident last night.

Twenty years ago, the saviour of Britain's balance of payments had his one and only flop. *By Jeeves* - with Lloyd Webber as composer, Alan Ayckbourn as lyricist and Eric Thompson, father of Emma, as director - opened to dreadful reviews and closed within weeks.

David Hemmings, who played Bertie Wooster in that production, was in the audience to see the show reborn at the Duke of York's Theatre, London, last night.

Though he went on to become the most successful composer of British musicals ever, Sir Andrew has never forgotten his moment of failure. If an interviewer didn't ask him about *By Jeeves*, he would bring up the subject himself.

Now, 20 years on, he has decided to exorcise the ghost. He and Ayckbourn have re-created the show. It has new songs, there have been many changes to the script from Ayckbourn and it is snappier and shorter.

Nevertheless for the opening 20 minutes it left a first night audience a little bewildered.

This seemed extremely small-scale Lloyd Webber. It was almost an Edinburgh Fringe

skit. The set had barely any scenery, there were just five musicians, and bore the frankly unnecessary conceit of presenting the Woodhouse story in the form of Jeeves and Wooster putting on a piece of amateur dramatics.

Then things began to perk up considerably. As the audience began to accept this was not a lavish *Sunset Boulevard* or *Phantom of the Opera*, it warmed to the delightful melodies and their knockabout Ayckbourn lyrics.

The predatory wooing of Wooster by the pugnacious Honoria Glossop ("The secret with men, of course, is to treat them like horses") provided one of the many moments that had the audience bucking up with laughter.

The show had light comedy ensemble acting of the highest standard, led by Steven Pacey and Malcolm Sinclair.

Rarely has a Lloyd Webber show provided so much humour. Afterwards, members of the audience described the show as "great fun" and "daft".

This was Lloyd Webber in minor key, but no less pleasurable for that. The lingering pain in his psyche has been purged.

David Lister

DAILY POEM

Shakespeare and crisps

By Brendan Kennelly

The silent majority are a noisy lot, thought Ace, venturing down a street into a theatre where the stage was set for A Midsummer-Night's Dream in mid-winter. Crisps and peanuts were available in the theatre bar and many customers, e'er the play began, filled their bellies with beer which meant they were pissing throughout the first act. It was a nightmare for Ace who was fit to scream.

He changed seats. The couple in front were chatting like Saddam, he saw but couldn't hear the play. Bad. Bad dream.

If only the silent majority stayed silent, the thought, Shakespeare might be with us a moment but whenever these words have a chance to fly about crisps, beer and peanuts knock 'em out.

Our hero quit the theatre, into the town, compelled content in that fastfood sea, to drown.

Is it any wonder people think he's a clown?

On 11 June 1965 Allen Ginsberg, Adrian Mitchell, Christopher Logue and Michael Horowitz packed-out the Royal Albert Hall with an International Poetry Incarnation and brought Beat and performance poetry to this country for the first time. This Sunday it happens again. Mitchell and Logue are joined by Patience Agbabi, Simon Armitage, James Berry, James Fenton, John Hegley, Paul Jennings, Fran Landesman, Evelyn Tubb and Patti Smith. 10.30am, open at 12.45pm. Box office 0171-589 8212.

international

Germany contemplates ending conscription

IMRE KARACS
Bonn

Germany's declining economic power is threatening one of the cornerstones of its democratic system: the conscripted national army, which replaced the professionalism of the country's militaristic past.

A heated row within the government over proposed defence cuts has focused attention on Germany's inability to finance conscription beyond the year 2000. Yesterday, the Free Democrats, the junior partners

in the governing coalition, called for a parliamentary debate, and announced they would hold a referendum among their members over the future of the Bundeswehr.

"If it came to cutting 10,000-20,000 men or more, then I could see that we would have to call conscription into question, at least in its current form," said Günther Nolting, the Free Democrats' defence spokesman. "I could well imagine that we would have to consider introducing a militia system in Germany."

Mr Waigel, painted as a Scrooge prepared to sacrifice the democratic principles of the nation's defence on the altar of financial rectitude, has even been denounced by members of his own party. "If the total cuts of 12 billion [marks] demanded by the Finance Minister are what we really want politically, then we cannot maintain the draft," said Klaus Rose, a fellow Christian Socialist and chairman of parliament's defence committee.

The debate was sparked last week by a deliberately leaked

letter written by Volker Rühe, the Defence Minister, to his cabinet colleague Theo Waigel, who is in charge of the finance ministry. Mr Waigel's demand for a cut in the defence budget would undermine the draft and endanger Europe-wide arms procurement projects, Mr Rühe wrote.

The latter include the four-nation Eurofighter aircraft in which Britain has a stake, the Franco-German spy satellite Helios, as well as a new combat helicopter and a transport helicopter to be built together with

Germany's European partners. Mr Rühe's warning about European commitments was addressed to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who takes a personal interest in these projects.

But raising the alarm over conscription was meant for the German public, the majority of whom continue to mistrust people who earn their living as soldiers.

"A professional army keeps itself busy - 'its trade is war' - was how the liberal daily *Süddeutsche Zeitung* articulated the angst of the man in the street

in yesterday's editorial. At present, 140,000 out of the Bundeswehr's total strength of 340,000 are drafted.

Military service is not popular - half of last year's potential recruits declared themselves to be conscientious objectors and opted for community service instead. But the universal draft is seen as a guarantee of fair recruitment, reflecting a cross-section of society, and excluding the possibility of the armed forces ever again falling into the hands of professional soldiers with a mission of their

own. The army's duty to summon every able-bodied male German citizen of conscription age is enshrined in the constitution.

The defence budget has been whittled down from 54bn marks at the time of German reunification in 1990 to DM47.1bn (£20bn). Now Mr Waigel wants to cut it again to DM46bn next year and keep slashing costs until the year 2000, in order to bring the budget deficit down to a level that meets the Maastricht criteria and qualify Germany for European Monetary Union.

Chancellor Kohl, who has been watching his sparring ministers with growing irritation, yesterday repeated his commitment to a conscript force. But critics say there will soon not be enough money to finance the Bundeswehr at its current size, and cost-cutting will inevitably lead to a radical overhaul.

Earlier this year, France decided to ditch two centuries of military tradition in favour of a leaner, fitter and cheaper army, and Germany may well have to follow suit.

New turn of Corsican violence alarms Paris

MARY DEJEVSKY
Paris

In words that have a familiar and awful resonance in Britain and Northern Ireland, the mayor of Bastia in northern Corsica called on the French authorities yesterday to stop "getting lost in negotiations with this or that armed band. Respect the rule of law and disarm the armed groups - all armed groups."

The mayor, Emile Zuccarelli, was speaking the day after a powerful car bomb exploded in the picturesque old port area of his city, killing one person and injuring 15, two seriously.

Three of the victims, including the man killed, Pierre Louis Lorenzi, 34, were known members of Cuncolta, the legal political front for one of Corsica's most hardline nationalist movements, the FLNC.

Charles Piert, 46, who was very seriously injured, is a co-founder of the FLNC. He is regarded as the main target of the attack.

The bomb was planted in a Citroën parked in front of the offices of the security firm they ran. In a pattern repeated time and again, the car had been stolen the previous day and parked close to its target. The bomb is believed to have been activated by a remote control.

Although Corsica has been wracked by violence in recent years, this attack - which took place on Monday afternoon, at the start of the tourist season - was immediately condemned on the island and in Paris as a new and dangerous departure.

Until now, attacks have been "targeted" at people or buildings deemed to be directly involved in the conflict.

Monday's bomb is regarded

as the first intended to injure indiscriminately. Among those hurt were people who had been sitting in seafront bars and passers-by, including a 14-year-old boy and two retired people.

Yesterday, the scenes of blood and destruction in Bastia were being compared with the aftermath of car bombs in Lebanon and Algeria, places that have historical and current significance in France.

In Paris, the Interior Minister, Jean-Louis Debré, called such violence "intolerable".

He promised to send in a unit of special paramilitary police. In another sign of firmness, the head of the anti-terrorist section of the French police, Irène Stoller, was immediately dispatched to Bastia to head the investigation in person.

The atmosphere in Bastia was one of shock and dismay as the implications of the attack sank in. The killing brought the number of people killed directly in terrorist attacks in Corsica to 20 in less than two years.

As worrying for many Corsicans is the extent to which the island now seems governed by the gun rather than by law. Many Corsicans blame inaction and wheeler-dealing by French authorities for this situation.

A visit to the island last January from the interior minister, Jean-Louis Debré, was thoroughly eclipsed by the FLNC, which staged a night-time encounter with 600 armed guerrillas in a mountain hide-out for the benefit of the French press.

The Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, denied that Paris was involved in deals with the terrorists. But this was the only way many people could explain the fact that the FLNC's show of strength had gone unpunished.



Aftermath: A victim of Monday's nationalist bomb in the Corsican port of Bastia is carried to safety by firemen

Photograph: Reuters

Nanny exposes Netanyahu's obsessions

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

On the day Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister of Israel, his wife, Sara, would not let their nanny out of the house to vote. "I really wanted to, but she did not let me go," says Tanya Shaw, the Netanyahu family nanny who was fired for burning the soup last Sunday and has astonished Israelis with her revelations of life in the Prime Minister's household.

During the six months she was employed, Ms Shaw says she was treated with Dickensian rigour by Mrs Netanyahu. On being hired, she said: "I could not wear make-up and I had to wear carpet slippers."

Her terms of employment were also strict, she says. "We drew up a contract which stated that, if I left, I would have to pay 4,800 shekels (£1,000)."

When Ms Shaw was expelled from the Netanyahu house by the prime minister's bodyguard, she says Mrs Netanyahu refused to let her take belongings unless she first paid £1,000.

Having confided her troubles to the newspaper, Ma'ariv, she did finally return to the house to get her clothes. "They packed them like they were throwing away trash," she said. "Even my glasses were broken, and they put the garbage that was in the room in the suitcase."

All this has made riveting reading for Israelis and will certainly have done lasting damage to Mrs Netanyahu, 35, who was previously little known.

It also shows that Mr Netanyahu has a curious home life. According to Ms Shaw's ac-

count, his wife is obsessed with cleanliness. "I had to wash my hands every time I was about to touch the children," she says. "I had to wash my hands before I touched their bed, their clothes, the laundry, anything."

Mr Netanyahu was also unable to touch his sons, Avner and Yair, because of his wife's insistence on constant hand-washing. Ms Shaw claims that Yair was not allowed to get off the sofa and sat for hours watching television because Mrs Netanyahu thought he would get dirty if his feet

touched the floor. She says: "Other children, friends, cannot come to the house because they are 'dirty'."

The prime minister's office said Ms Shaw was unbalanced and was sacked because she was regarded as a security threat by the Shin Bet security agency. However, a Shin Bet official told the Israeli press: "There is - and, as far as we know, there never was - a security problem with the Netanyahu family nanny. The nanny never disturbed our work and we never perceived her as a security risk."

To emphasise the British Government's anger with Mr Masari, Mr Rifkind briefed

Saudi officials on a British plan to change the United Nations convention on refugees to stop people taking advantage of asylum laws while promoting, funding or assisting terrorism.

The plan would not affect Mr Masari, but could prevent "future Masaris", said an aide. Saudi officials have been angered by his recent remarks, in which he supported what he called the intellectual arguments behind the Dharan bombing, although he denied involvement.

He denied involvement.

War softens Turkish PM's Islamic zeal

Kurdish struggle is forcing Erbakan to dilute his fervour, writes Hugh Pope

Istanbul - The Turkish republic has conquered two of its most damaging political taboos: the fear of a pro-Islamic government, and of an automatic military intervention to prevent it.

But not even the all-embracing rhetoric of Necmettin Erbakan, the pro-Islamic Prime Minister who took office last Friday, nor his professions of friendship for Turkey's Middle Eastern neighbours, are likely to save him from a crash course in the taboos and violence of Turkey's equally old Kurdish problem.

Mr Erbakan will be haunted by decisions taken during the political uncertainty of the past nine months. With quiet support from its main ally, the United States, Turkey's republican establishment decided the time was ripe to target Syria, blaming it for harbouring the chief of the rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

Aggressive Turkish speeches were made in Hatay, the former Syrian province of Alexandretta seized by Turkey in 1939 and claimed by Syria. A military co-operation agreement was signed with Israel. A mysterious bomb exploded in Damascus near the house of the PKK's leader, Abdullah Ocalan.

Now Mr Ocalan is striking back, abandoning a frayed unilateral cease-fire. Last month the PKK shot up a pro-government television station near the Turkish Kurd town of



Erbakan: Already abandoned his promises to the Kurds

The military pact with Israel proved it was ready to act in harmony with the US-fostered concept of an Israeli-Turkish-Jordanian alliance, unnerving the main target, Syria, irritating Egypt and infuriating Iran. Any new regional initiative by Turkey, with its 65 million people and important economy, undoubtedly seemed a threat to the established Arab order.

Signs of strain between Turkey and Iran also surfaced last week, with Iranian claims that Turkish helicopters had targeted a border village and killed six civilians near the area affected by PKK-Turkish fighting. Turkey said the Iranian claim was a pretext to allow a mob to burn the Turkish flag in front of a Turkish consulate.

Iran, Iraq and Syria, therefore, responded with alacrity to the possibility of a new start with Mr Erbakan, who talked of Islamic brotherhood and a newly united Middle East. Iran's President, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, invited him to Tehran. The Iraqi newspaper *Babil* promised "economic and non-economic" benefits if he helped Iraq overcome its UN trade embargo. Even the Syrian state newspaper *Tishreen* cautiously welcomed a new start.

But Mr Erbakan's vision of Turkey's Middle East role is more that of an Ottoman-style leader. And while the need to consolidate power remains his overwhelming priority, he appears to be ready to dispense with his Islamic ideals.

Mr Erbakan has already abandoned his promise to grant ethnic rights to the Kurds. The first item on his government programme, read out on Saturday, was support for the army's purely military solution to the problem. A promise was made not to interfere with international and strategic agreements "if they do not damage national security". Positive-sounding contacts have started already between his Welfare Party and the Israeli embassy.

Turkish commentators are divided about the future of Mr Erbakan's coalition with True Path Party leader, Tansu Ciller, which faces a close parliamentary vote of confidence next Monday. But some are begging for a new approach to the Kurdish conflict that has killed 20,000 people since 1984. "It is the one-dimensional struggle against the PKK that is making the people in the south-east revolt," Gungor Mengi, chief columnist of *Sabah* newspaper, said.

1 Call the TSB Mortgage

QUOTATION LINE

2 Go hunt that house.

Find out what you can borrow, BEFORE hunting.

The call is free, the quote is free, so why not ring TSB PhoneBank for more information quoting reference IH3.

CALL FREE

0500 758 000

Mortgages

TSB We want you to say YES

Calls to PhoneBank may be recorded and monitored. A TSB cheque account is required. Assignment/assignment of a suitable life policy may be required by the Bank as security. Applicants must be aged 18 or over. All loans subject to status. Not available in the Channel Islands. Written quotations are available on request by calling 0500 758 000. TSB Bank plc and TSB Bank Scotland plc (regulated by IMRO and SFA) are representatives of the TSB Marketing Group which is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority only for TSB life insurance, pensions, unit trusts and offshore investments. Advice or recommendations relate only to the investments of that Group. TSB Bank plc, Victoria House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BZ. Registered in England and Wales. Number: 1099289. TSB Bank Scotland plc, Henry Duncan House, 120 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4LH. Registered in Scotland. Number: 95287.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

international

Next generation in space: Embarrassed Nasa chief looks to recapture technological lead



Challenger: Nasa's Shuttle programme has never really recovered from the disaster of January 1986 that cost the lives of all seven crew

Photograph: Reuters

US privatises Shuttle production

DAVID USBORNE
New York

America's fleet of space shuttles is facing replacement by a new generation of privately-operated orbiters that one day might take out only satellites and scientific experiments into space, but perhaps tourists as well.

Twenty-five years old and their image tarnished by the Challenger disaster of 1986, the existing shuttles will be phased out over the next decade.

On a landmark day for the venerable Nasa space agency, which has maintained complete control over America's space programme since 1958, the

United States government yesterday turned to private industry to develop a new breed of shuttles with a mission to take payloads into space more efficiently – and, above all, more cheaply – than is possible with existing shuttles.

The move is aimed at regaining what used to be America's unassailable dominance in the business of sending people and equipment into space. In the past decade, Nasa has watched in dismay as almost two-thirds of the world market for rocket launchings has slipped away from the US to other competitors, especially the European space programme.

Earlier this year, the chief of

Nasa, Daniel Goldin, shocked the US space industry when, delivering testimony on Capitol Hill, he bemoaned the extent to which America had allowed its lead in space technology to fall behind.

The entire US space community "should hang its head in shame", said Mr Goldin. "We can't go on like this. It's embarrassing".

The drive to privatise Nasa's operations is also being fuelled by restiveness in Congress over the sky-high costs of the Shuttle programme, caused in part by the overriding concern with safety.

This year, contracts have been signed with the United Space Alliance, a joint venture

of Lockheed Martin and Rockwell International, to take over, from October, much of the management of the existing shuttle fleet.

However, the task for the designers of the new rocket is not an easy one. The requirement is for a totally-reusable craft that will be able to go from Earth into orbit in a single-stage launch, which will involve shedding any parts along the way, such as rocket boosters or fuel tanks.

Above all, however, the new craft must be cheaper to operate. A single launch of the existing shuttles typically costs around \$300m (£320m), which translates to about \$10,000 (£6,410) per pound. The new

shuttle will be expected to fly into space at a cost of just \$1,000 (£641) per pound.

"This spacecraft is going to have to be thousands of times better than the old shuttle," said John Fike, a space expert at the Federation of American Scientists. "That is going to be hard to do".

The original contract will be worth \$941m (£603m) for the development of a single prototype aircraft that will be half the size of the machine that will eventually fly operationally. The prototype, which is scheduled to be ready for tests in 1999, will be required only to demonstrate its flying abilities, and will carry neither astronauts nor a payload.

Nasa, meanwhile, has said it expects to be able to keep the existing fleet of shuttles flying until about 2010, by which time their basic design will be almost 40 years old.

Officials emphasise that the new machine must be able to operate in a way that is similar to aircraft of a major airline, with speedy turnaround capabilities.

As well as competing in the burgeoning market for launching communications satellites, the craft would be equipped to deliver astronauts to a planned international space station and, eventually, even to take part in the space travel industry that is envisioned by some space experts.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

A new Vatican document on the family blasted abortion yesterday as a primordial evil that had reached "new depths of depravity" in the United States. The document by the Pontifical Council for the Family said euthanasia was second only to abortion in contempt for life and condemned efforts to legalise it in North America. "Abortion is a primordial evil and one of the fundamental problems of our age," said the document, a report on a meeting the council held in Mexico City last month. "In the United States, legalised abortion reaches new depths of depravity and cruelty with such inhuman practices as 'partial birth abortion'." *Vatican City - Reuters*

A German MP said four Western tourists taken hostage by Kashmiri rebels nearly a year ago may still be alive. Speaking from Kashmir, Greens deputy Vera Lengsfeld said people in the province said they had seen the hostages recently. Talks between Indian authorities and the separatist al-Faran group broke down last November. American Donald Hutchings and Britons Keith Mangan and Paul Wells were kidnapped while trekking last July. Dirk Hasert of Germany was captured four days later. A fifth hostage, Norwegian Hans Christian Ostroe, who was taken with him, was found beheaded last August. *Bonn - Reuters*

French agricultural production has almost tripled over the past 50 years, despite a reduction in agricultural land of almost 15 per cent, according to a new survey by France's official statistics office. The report shows France has increasingly adopted intensive farming methods and yields have risen sharply. Some 4.8 per cent of the population (just over one million people) are now engaged in agriculture in France, compared with only 2.2 per cent in the UK. *Mary Dejesky - Paris*

The United States is moving heavily armoured units out of Bosnia and replacing them with military police, and Nato's commander, General George Joulwan, said other alliance forces would soon follow suit. General Joulwan said replacements would be brought in by the end of August by the US, Britain and France, the three main contributors to the 50,000-member Nato-led peace-keeping force in Bosnia. *Tuzza, Hungary - Reuters*

Israeli warplanes rocketed a Palestinian base in south-east Lebanon yesterday following an ambush on Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank last week. The planes fired four rockets at a base of the Palestinian National Liberation Organisation (PNLO), a PLO splinter group, just 4.5 miles from the Syrian border, security sources said. *Ramallah - Reuters*

President Bill Clinton's lead over his challenger Bob Dole has slipped, suggesting controversies over FBI files and Whitewater are taking their toll. According to two polls, Mr Clinton is now ahead by 14 or 15 per cent, down from 20 per cent last month. Half or more of respondents said they believed Mr and Mrs Clinton did something wrong in Whitewater. *Rupert Cornwell - Washington*

Shops, businesses and banks worked normally yesterday on the eve of Chad's presidential election, run-off, despite an opposition call for a general strike over the first-round results. Sources close to the trade union confederation said it stood by its instruction to members to boycott today's runoff which President Idriss Deby is likely to win. *N'Djamena - Reuters*

Croatian state television has cancelled its only programme that ran items critical of the Croatian leader, President Franjo Tudjman. Staff of the program "Slikom na Sliku," or "Frame by Frame," said they had received no explanation. *Zagreb - AP*

Greenpeace's Denmark chapter has fired its leader in a controversy over the organisation's campaign against Danish eel-fishing in the North Sea. Mats Abrahamson is the first Greenpeace leader to be dismissed. Greenpeace International had campaigned against Danes fishing for sand eels off the coast of Scotland. Many Greenpeace members in Denmark disagreed but Abrahamson stuck to instructions from headquarters in London. The Danish chapter decided on Monday to fire him. *Copenhagen - AP*

FBI arrest militia linked to bomb conspiracy



US police outside a militia member's home in Phoenix

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

US federal agents have arrested another suspect in a continuing round-up of members of the "Viper Militia", the far-right paramilitary group in Arizona accused of plotting to blow up government buildings in a scheme uncannily similar to the Oklahoma City bombing of April 1995.

On the basis of evidence thus far released by prosecutors, the group does not appear to have actually carried out any attacks. However, a host of signs suggest it is an especially violent and well-armed specimen of the paranoid anti-government groups that have been dragged into the spotlight over the past 14 months.

Foremost among these signs is what prosecutors claim is a 1994 video made by the group, amounting to a reconnaissance tour of targets in the Phoenix area – not only representatives of hated federal agencies like the Internal Revenue, the FBI, the US Secret Service and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, but also buildings housing local law-enforcement bodies such as the Phoenix police, the Arizona national guard, as well as a television station.

A voice-over on the tape describes how each target could be destroyed, complete with details of the buildings' support structures, plans to destroy gas and water mains to hamper firefighters and rescuers, and for "anti-personnel" bombs to be planted in nearby mailboxes.

These would explode as survivors tried to escape.

Nor was this idle talk. Police say that only two months ago, on 1 May, Viper Militia members claimed to have stockpiled 1,700lb of ammonium nitrate, the same ingredient which, mixed with fuel, made up the two-ton truck bomb that wrecked the Alfred P Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people.

On Monday a six-month undercover infiltration scheme came to a climax with the arrest of 134 people, 11 men and two women. As they were picked up, the suspects at their homes, police found 400lb of the chemical as well as some 200 guns. A "potentially dangerous situation," had been defused, the Attorney General, Janet Reno, said.

Thus far no links have been established between the Viper Militia and the Oklahoma bombing. But the arrests only underscore the appeal of remote Arizona, with its frontier traditions, as a training ground for separatist groups, determined to avenge incidents like the FBI siege at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, in 1992 and the federal agents' assault at Waco the following year.

Far-right extremists are believed responsible for the October 1995 sabotage of the Sunset Express train as it crossed the deserts of western Arizona. The state was also home to Timothy McVeigh, one of the two men charged with carrying out the Oklahoma bombing. He is due to go on trial later this year.

SWIFTCALL
WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE OUR NEW SERVICE AND IMPROVED PRICES

FROM JULY 24 1996

call **USA** for only

OFF PEAK TIMES: 2am - 5pm 100 mins free per min

for details call **0800 279 0800**

20p (AUSTRALIA, CANADA, IRELAND, NEW ZEALAND)
40p (JAPAN, HONG KONG, SINGAPORE, THAILAND)
60p (INDIA, SOUTH AFRICA, BRAZIL, MEXICO)

★ easy instant connection
★ free access to our exchange
★ fantastic global rates

• please have your credit card ready •

operators are standing by 24hrs a day 7 days a week

These prices and this new service are not available until July 24th 1996. Current prices are slightly higher and there is a connection cost to our London exchange charged at your normal carrier's rates.

Show us the tables, and trust us to judge

Critics of league tabling as a source of useful information served by their schools and hospitals are at it again today. Whenever you hear Harriet Harman or Simon Hughes or the National Union of Teachers or the British Medical Association saying "but the data are too complex, you can't capture the subtleties of performance in crude tabular form", note that what they are really saying is: "You, the punters, are stupid." The public, they are arrogantly and patronisingly saying, is incapable of understanding that a partial measure of performance, such as exam success or surgery waiting times, is just that: only part of the picture. They think that you, the customer, assume it is the whole picture. Ergo, they think you are stupid.

Actually, evidence suggests that consumers of public services are rather sophisticated, and becoming more so. They look at league-table information and add it to the scores of other signs as to how well a hospital or school is doing. To listen to critics of tables, you would think the public had never made any kind of three-dimensional judgement. But, of course, virtually everyone makes judgements all the time, using information from all kinds of sources. They include recent form guides in their judgements, but they do not base their best bet solely on the results of the last race – just as they know you can-

not predict England's performance in the World Cup by looking at where they finished in Euro 96. League tables – how to read them, and how not to read too much into them – are part and parcel of the culture. That is one good reason why this innovation continues to be a welcome strand in the national effort to boost public-service performance.

The Department of Health yesterday gave us information on non-clinical performance by hospitals. It is all the more useful for allowing comparisons to be made of the performance of the same hospital over time. But, having read the latest tables, people are not going to storm the next meeting of their local health trust and demand that ambulances start arriving quicker. The rhetoric used to sell the first league tables – that consumers of public services would force improvements by taking their custom elsewhere – was misleading. Most consumers are not activists; it is governors who are activists, and only a few consumers want to take on the responsibility of helping to govern schools and hospitals.

The Audit Commission, now in its third year of collecting comparative data on the performance of local authorities, knows how little local people use its figures, in spite of its insistence that they are publicised locally. But the data remain useful. They are scanned by managers, governors, professional bodies and auditors. "Could do better"

is a vital tool in the hands of good executives, provided staff are motivated to improve.

Where there is no such "improving community", change is less likely, and comparative figures often have only an academic value. Literally, there are several league tables for universities, some ranking them on research or teaching prowess, others according to spending on books. It is remarkable how little the positions of individual institutions change. For a university to pull itself up by its boot straps and move from, say, the second division to the premiership, is much harder than for a school,

because a school can mobilise local resources (not all financial) on its way.

Performance measures of the kind used to compile league tables tend to act as confirmation of what managers already suspect. Tables, equally, tend to confirm what the public picks up from waiting room or school-gate gossip. The data, therefore, need not be too sophisticated. A few broad measures may be all that are needed. Intending parents often use a subjective test: a good school literally smells right.

What might the public, if asked, seek by way of performance indicators? A strong criticism of Tory management

reforms has been that they are top down – the Secretary of State or her appointees knows what the public wants to know. That explains why so much weight has been put on exam results. Important, of course, but rarely the only consideration for parents who, in real life, rely on a web of impressions bedded in the detail of locality and everyday experience with a school.

In that mass of information to which the public deserves access, there is some that needs professional interpretation. Stephen Dorrell yesterday promised to enter the controversial territory of clinical comparison, which could mean setting one hospital's death rate alongside another's. Caution is needed, not because anyone should be squeamish about measuring the survival or recovery rate of a consultant's patients, but because such figures may lack meaning: a top consultant who only sees extreme cases may have a higher death rate. However, that is not an argument against such measures: well-counselled patients understand these caveats, just as they understand that a school in a deprived area will struggle to do as well as a school in a leafy private estate.

Next week, the Institute of Public Policy Research brings out a report urging that the Citizen's Charter apparatus be retained if Labour comes to power. The best reason is that, for all the flim-flam and ministerial boasting, charter talk keeps public expectations

high, where they should be. In health, as in other public services, people now have "private sector" expectations of service quality. That is one of the valuable Thatcher legacies. There can be no regretting the pressure on public managers to perform, and carry their staff along with them. Instead of yearning to go back to bad old pre-league table days, professionals and the opposition parties should be offering ways of refining and improving the information available to you, the people who pay the bill.

A Wight way and a wrong way

It's good enough for Man, Jersey and Guernsey, why not Wight? That's what the island's council leaders seem to think, anyway. They want more control over local taxation, just like the Scots; but they want the power turn the island into a tax haven. Clearly they see a lucrative financial centre in Cowes, stuffed with tax refugees. Why didn't Tony Blair try the same trick? Rather than foist a referendum on the Scots, he could have persuaded them to turn Scotland into a tax haven, too. Perhaps he felt the sight of wealthy Sassanachs tripping off the Edinburgh-Heathrow shuttle to clock up their local residence requirement would be more than a good Scot could bear.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tony Blair: 'hardly a dictator'

Sir: There seems a lot of nonsense talked recently about Tony Blair's "dictatorial" style, based on the grumblings of a minority of malcontents ("Labour leader to crush dissent", 1 July).

No party leader enjoys unanimous support in a democracy. There are always snipers and critics, as well as those offering more constructive criticism. But Tony Blair enjoys more support than any other current party leader, or any past Labour leader. He was elected by the biggest majority of any Labour leader, received overwhelming backing during the Clause IV debate, is welcomed warmly at party meetings around the country, and 100,000 osw members have joined since Mr Blair became leader.

As to his "dictatorial" style: Tony Blair is the first politician in British history to make his party manifesto subject to the debate, discussion, and vote of every single party member. This represents a huge exercise in party democracy, giving all members the opportunity for a say: hardly the actions of a "dictator".

PAUL RICHARDS
London W6

Sir: Paul Flynn, the Labour MP for Newport West, is wrong to say that too many areas of policy there are no differences between Labour and the Conservatives. Every single policy put to the electorate by Labour in recent months has been designed with the overall aim of building a new Britain with the help of every party member and every British citizen.

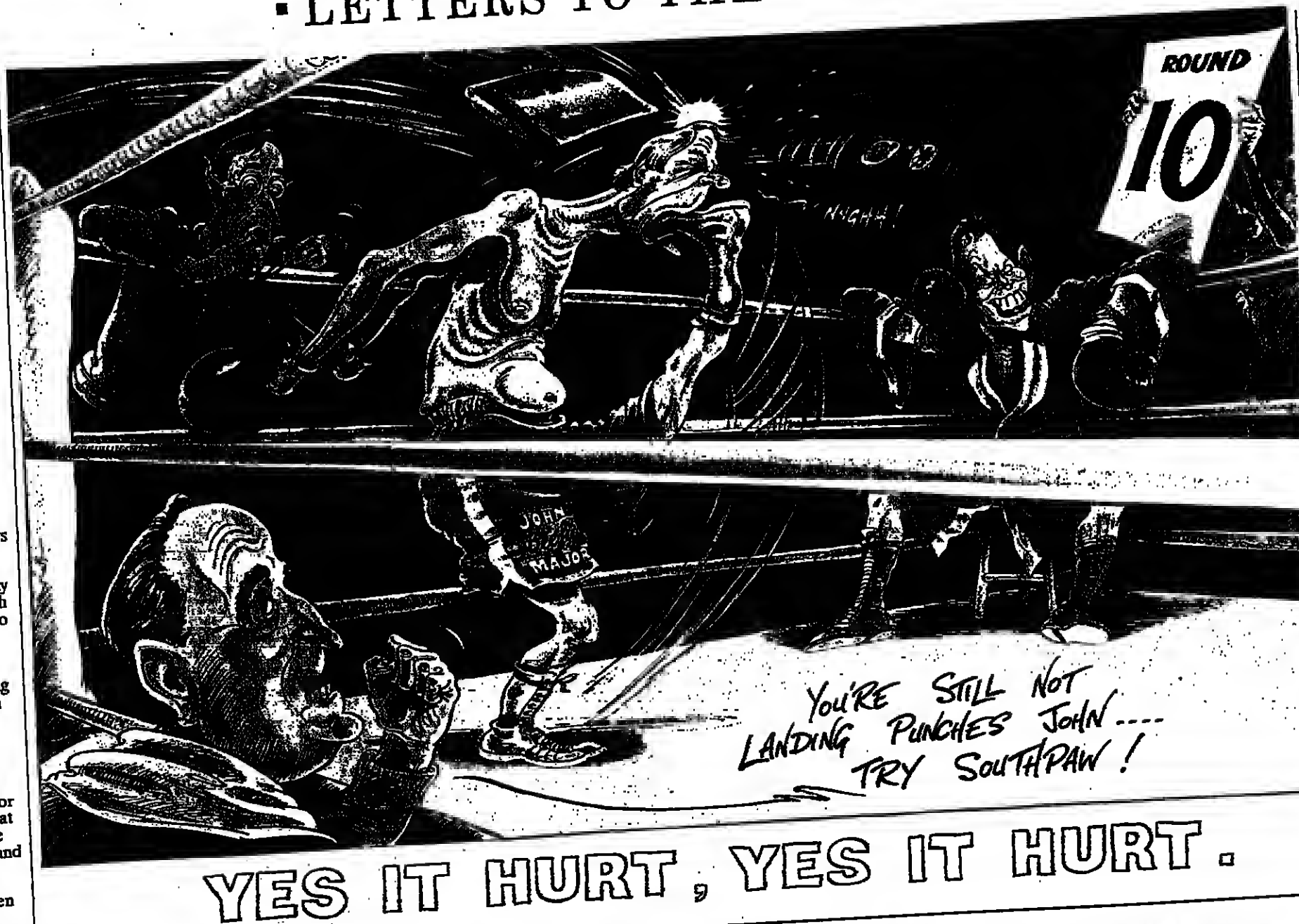
Our vision of a new Britain is the opposite of the country the Tories have created over the past 18 years, where the majority have been let down by the Government in order to protect the privileged few. It is therefore a pity that Paul Flynn does not see the need to put all of his energy into reminding the people of our country about this need for change. Instead, he has only managed to present the Tory Government with the opportunity to turn the attention away from the cracks in their tired, discredited administration.

MARK HOSGOOD
Hakin,
Pembrokeshire

Sir: Under Tony Blair's "autocratic" leadership, the Wales Labour Party has nine representatives, directly elected by Welsh conference delegates, to sit on the National Policy Forum; 10,000 Welsh party members have voted on the party's new constitution, and, for the first time, our manifesto commitments will be subject to the approval not just of a NEC/shadow cabinet committee, but of the party's national membership.

As a result, the Labour Party's programme and policies at the next general election will more closely reflect the views of the people of Wales, and of Britain as a whole, than will those of any other political party. However difficult this process may have been for a small minority of Westminster MPs to accept, it is a vital part of the transformation of the Labour Party from an unsuccessful opposition party to a successful government.

LYNNE NEAGLE
Merthyr Tydfil,
Mid Glamorgan



Human rights in Europe

Sir: I was interested in the letter from John Priestman, who gave splendid and long service as clerk to the Council of Europe Assembly ("Sabotage of Britain's role in Europe", 19 June).

He was entirely right to point out that the governments of the founding states provided their defence mechanisms by constraining the powers of the assembly – and by severely limiting its capacity to secure publicity. This has meant that any laudable action it takes is frequently attributed to Brussels.

It has escaped notice in Britain that the assembly has recently strengthened its capacity to respond to serious breaches of human rights in member states. In future, should there be grave abuse of human rights, then our parliamentary representatives can mount a more effective challenge to the credentials – and therefore the acceptance – of the delegations from an offending country.

I suspect that when this change of rule was approved some of the members of the assembly may not have fully perceived its implication. That failure did not extend to the British delegation.

Perhaps that development might prove a useful contribution to human rights and, therefore, provide a justification of the involvement of my Labour colleagues and myself.

PETER HARDY
MP for Wentworth
(Lab)
House of Commons
London, SW1

Confusion over community care

Sir: Last Thursday disabled people won the right to continuing community care from their local authorities even if these councils cannot afford to provide them ("Disabled win right to have services restored", 28 June). What now appears to be a Catch 22 situation for local authorities still leaves disabled people caught in the middle of a funding mess.

Community care was heralded as an initiative which would support individuals in their own homes according to need. Three years on the picture is one of national confusion. The level and availability of services depends on where a disabled person lives and the rate of charging alters from local authority to local authority.

While disabled people find it impossible to foot the bill for the community-care system, local authorities may still raise charges to cover costs because of inadequate government funding. Scope, along with other voluntary organisations, is calling on the Government to end its policy of withholding 9 per cent of its grant to social service departments, which again forces local authorities to raise the money at a local level through charging.

The introduction of charging for services which were previously provided free by the health service has left many people worried about paying for services such as help with bathing, getting dressed or going to the toilet. Scope's own

research of 1,500 disabled people (*Disabled in Britain: A World Apart*) shows that 17 per cent have had to refuse a service because they could not afford to pay for it.

First-hand experiences of disabled people and their carers show that community care is in danger of failing its original aim to improve quality, choice and efficiency. While we welcome this new ruling, disabled people remain at the sharp end of the system having to fight for services to live everyday lives.

RICHARD BREWSTER
Chief Executive, Scope
London W1

Politicisation of judges

Sir: Jonathan Cooper of Liberty (letter, 28 June) thinks a Bill of Rights would "reduce judicial activism and not increase it".

It is true that the power transferred to judges by the establishment of a Bill of Rights may be exercised in an "activist" or in a "restrained" way, and that this will vary over time, as the history of the US Supreme Court shows.

But the central point is that the introduction of a written constitutional document against which Acts of Parliament are tested, and found either acceptable or "unconstitutional", necessarily shifts power over political decisions from elected politicians to unelected judges and makes judges more political. It cannot be otherwise. It is time constitutional

reformers came clean and admitted this.

There is another problem. Mr Cooper must think there is a set of "guaranteed rights and freedoms" on a tablet somewhere which we can all consult and agree upon. A cursory examination of different views on issues such as abortion, capital punishment, or carrying firearms shows what a nonsense this is.

RICHARD BACON
London SW7

Anti-Irish racism is still rife

Sir: It is a shame that Jack O'Sullivan did not step outside the pubs and hostilities of Manchester to research his article into the Irish in Manchester ("If you're hip, you must be Irish", 1 July). He would not have to go far to find homeless Irish people selling the Big Issue or Irish women travelling into the city to work in low-paid cleaning jobs. The reality for the Irish in this city is that they are largely working class, working in the service industries, if at all, and facing discrimination and deprivation on a day-to-day basis.

Irish people walk the line everyday in this city between acceptance and rejection. Anti-Irish racism is rife, although in recent years many people have refused to accept it and have mounted campaigns locally and nationally against discrimination. One of the main reasons why Irish people are loath to complain is that

they are frightened of coming under the surveillance of Special Branch and of being stopped under the Prevention of Terrorism Act at Manchester airport next time they travel back to Ireland. Even during the ceasefire more than 20,000 Irish people were stopped as they travelled home.

While civic-inspired and brewery-sponsored "Irish weeks" may come and go, it is only when the political situation in Ireland is resolved in a just and peaceful way that our community will be accepted.

BERNADETTE HYLAND
Irish in Britain
Representation Group
Manchester

Search for patriotic spirit

Sir: Bryan Appleyard's contention that St George's day is ignored these days is not universally true ("Yes, I am an Englishman", 27 June). Red roses have appeared in my home on 23 April for as long as I can remember.

I am with Mr Appleyard in his revolt against "dull globalism", but think whining about "being made the scapegoat of the West" is unworthy too. A true patriotism admits past imperial wrongs, combats their results, follows our own best traditions and respects the traditions of other nations.

"Your country needs you" is still true – the need is now for a patriotic spirit that will inspire care at home and trust abroad.

JA TAPSFIELD
Wadhurst,
East Sussex

Communion in mixed marriages

Sir: Your religious affairs correspondent ("Gossip over Blair's Catholic tastes", 2 July) is quite right to surmise that the admission to Catholic communion of an Anglican married to a Roman Catholic "may well be legal in Roman Catholic terms". Indeed it is. Because the spiritual need of some couples to share communion is so great, it is said that more people do not know that in 1993 the Vatican issued a *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* which included guidelines for the admission to communion of those who are not Roman Catholics.

In certain circumstances, by way of exception, and under certain conditions, admission to the eucharist "may be permitted, or even commended" (n.129). The *Directory* identified the spouses in a mixed marriage who share the sacraments of baptism and marriage as in possible need of eucharistic sharing. This sharing is exceptional, and in each case certain conditions have to be fulfilled (n.160).

In the absence of episcopal guidelines, the Catholic minister is to assure himself that in a particular case there is a real need, a spontaneous request, Catholic eucharistic belief and proper dispositions (n.131). The general guidelines also require that the other Christian does not have access to a minister of his or her own church: the condition is always fulfilled once the need of the couple to share communion is recognised. An Anglican minister is not usually present when the couple are at mass together.

Pope John Paul II has personally expressed his "joy" that in certain particular cases Catholic ministers are able to administer the eucharist to Christians in partial but not full communion with the Catholic Church who greatly desire to receive it, freely request it, and manifest Catholic eucharistic faith (*Ut Unum Sint*, 1995, 46).

RUTH REARDON
Association of Interchurch Families
London SE1

Losses on the Somme battlefield

Sir: Paul Tyson writes that 20,000 British soldiers were killed in a single day at the Battle of the Somme ("What a waste. The biggest mistake ever", 1 July). Later he contradicts himself by writing that 57,470 were killed or wounded on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 80 years ago. According to AJP Taylor, writing in *English History 1914-1945*, 19,000 British soldiers were killed on 1 July 1916, the worst ever casualties in the history of the British Army, although he asserts that British losses at El Alamein were nearly as bad in relation to the numbers engaged.

The Battle of the Somme lasted from July to November. AJP Taylor gives British losses in killed and wounded as 420,000. French: 194,000, and German 465,000. According to figures given to the House of Commons in 1921 the total of dead on the Allied side was 3,415,618 and for the Central Powers including Turkey 3,601,690. The British high command was no more profligate in soldiers' lives than the enemies. The Americans lost 115,600 dead in the comparatively short time their army was engaged.

JOHN FAULLS
Portsmouth

analysis

The making of a tennis hero

Tim Henman is a rare British success at Wimbledon. So how do parents bring their children within reach of the sport's holy grail, asks Jojo Moyes

Mary's father made her and her family live in an old car so that she spent her teenage years travelling across the country. She had no conventional schooling, no chance to make real friends and no proper home to speak of. Her relationship with her father has now broken down so far that a restraining order was placed upon him.

Mary's father still cannot understand what the problem is. He was only helping her to play tennis.

Jim Pierce may have taken his ambition to extremes, but there is little doubt that for a young player to succeed in tennis today, their parents need to want it as much as they do, and probably more.

And however much of a surprise the British public finds the success of the 21-year-old native player Tim Henman, it has certainly been no accident. Henman, back on Wimbledon's centre court today, began playing tennis at three, encouraged by his mother, Jane, who played junior Wimbledon. His grandfather and great-grandmother had also played there.

By the time he was 11, he was being coached by British champion David Lloyd and has now won at least £100,000 in prize money. Henman, whose family live in a neo-Georgian house near Oxford, says: "Probably the most important factor from my background was that we had a court at home, and I always had someone to practise with."

Compare this with the experience of Luke Milligan, the fellow Briton he knocked out of Wimbledon last week. Milligan, 19, is a taxi driver's son who learnt to play tennis at comprehensive school. He took up tennis seriously just four years ago after he failed to win a place with Tottenham Hotspur Football Club.

His father Jim Milligan works 10 hours a day, seven days a week, to finance his son's tennis career, while his family have sacrificed holidays and other luxuries. Jim Milligan recently told how the family had rented a home in Nottingham while Luke was playing there - "and that was our holiday". His other children, Nina, 16, Sarah, 15, and Peter, 12 (also a keen tennis player)

accompany their brother to watch him compete.

Luke Milligan's success is something of an anomaly, as although tennis is gradually losing its elitist image, for serious success on the courts one needs to have a credit rating as strong as one's backhand.

Professional coaching, for example, costs up to £25 an hour, depending on the grade and location. Then there is the use of an indoor tennis court at up to £20 an hour. Multiply these figures by at least five per week. Then add the cost of tennis club membership (several hundred pounds a year), equipment, and then, once the player starts work on the county and regional circuit, travelling, hotel and entry expenses (don't think you can expect prize money at this level). Now it becomes apparent why there are still few Milligans to be found at Wimbledon.

Many of Britain's best tennis players never break out of the 100-rankings, so that their prize money never covers their costs, or they become one-season wonders. Among the handful of home-grown successes are Sue Barker, now building a successful career as a commentator, Virginia Wade, John Lloyd, and Jeremy Bates, who was knocked out of this year's tournament in the first round, but may be consoled by the Porsche he has bought.

In the United States, which turns out a high proportion of Wimbledon's entry, young players attend privately owned and operated junior academies where families pay fees of more than £20,000 a year to have their children taught top-level tennis while pursuing their high school studies.

Andre Agassi, Jim Courier, Pete Sampras, Michael Chang and others are all alumni of these schools.

With funds now available from the National Lottery, Britain may soon have its own hot-house specialist schools, to help less-well-off players to succeed. Even Tim Henman, with his support network, found it necessary to take advantage of the (now abandoned) David Lloyd tennis scheme, which helped sponsor young players.

The Lawn Tennis Association, the sport's governing body, has tried to address this with a number of support schemes, including the creation



Great British tennis hopes: Tim Henman as a boy and as this year's Wimbledon quarter-finalist (main picture); past glories at SW19 (clockwise from bottom left) John Lloyd, Jeremy Bates, Virginia Wade, and Sue Barker

in 1990 of the Rover Junior Tennis Initiative.

"The scheme has identified the need to help as many youngsters as possible and for players to develop within their home environment," said a spokesman for the LTA. Rover pays for things like coaching and court time.

The scheme, which sponsors players for up to £15,000, is currently helping 150 future British hopefuls (now aged between 10-16). But the LTA admits that

the best way for the players to get onto the scheme "is to show promise at club or county level", both of which require parents to have already served up large amounts of both time and money.

"Parents are always going to have to be committed. Even with these supports there needs to be a lot of parental support both in terms of time and money," the spokesman admitted.

But there are other questions of commitment. As the three siblings of Luke Milligan are already no doubt aware, the career ambitions of a young player means that other family considerations often have to take a second ranking.

Mark Winters, a tennis writer who has covered the international tennis circuit for the past 15 years, believes that the ambitions of parents are often the driving force of the young player's success, and that all members of the family can become losers.

"I've seen some abhorrent things. The parents want to have the next Steffi Graf or Pete Sampras. They mortgage their hearts and souls along

with their children's lives," he said.

"If you looked at the top 10 women players a few years ago eight of them had fathers who no longer had jobs. The women were the sole support of the family, while Dad was 'coach and companion,'" said Winters.

Often the players are barely past puberty, and ill-equipped to deal with the intense pressure

with their children's lives," he said.

"The best example of that is Jennifer Capriati. Her mother, Denise, was a flight attendant and Stefano was an 'entrepreneur', but you know what that means."

He said brothers and sisters who were left to tag along were also common fixtures of tournaments. "An example of that is David Pierce, or Stevie Capriati who sat there all day," he says. "Some of these kids just have no identity."

And the special attention given to the player may often be just as damaging to the player as their siblings, Annabel Croft,

the former British No 1 and whiter-than-white teenage tennis star, said in an interview that as a player, like everyone else, she had been incredibly selfish and self-absorbed.

"Part of the reason I wanted to give up tennis was that I couldn't bear to think of myself

often the players are barely past puberty, and ill-equipped to deal with the intense pressure

being like that. I didn't have any friends and I had to think of myself as number one all the time," she said.

According to Winters, the "gift" of being allowed to think about nothing other than their own game led to players who were not just selfish, but "childlike", often well into adulthood.

"Where today can you find people who are journeymen, at best, but with entouragees where you have coach, a trainer, somebody who is overseeing travel, just taking on everything that you normally

have to deal with? The only other place you see that kind of treatment lavished on young kids is in the music or movie industry. Of course lots of them are dysfunctional."

Often the players bearing the burden of parental expectation are barely past puberty, and psychologically ill-equipped to deal with the intense pressure. This leads to high levels of burnout, Annabel Croft said she was "desperately unhappy" until she gave up tennis at the age of 21, while Andrea Jaeger and Tracy Austin, both subjected to pressure by ambitious fathers, have both since dropped out of the professional circuit.

In recognition of this, the LTA's age eligibility rules were changed last year to block anyone under 15 from having a computer ranking and to monitor the number of matches played by young competitors.

The changes came about partly as a result of the testimony of witnesses, including players, who listed the major stresses on the tour as: 1) parents and family; 2) travel; 3) loneliness; 4) the media; 5) competition; 6) agents.

The ITF has also published

booklets giving advice on how to cope. One, entitled *Burn-out: The Solution* reads: "Burn-out is a modern-day phenomenon. It is the result of outside pressures being placed on talented children to succeed at any cost, whether it be in education, music or tennis."

Despite the hours of sweat and tears, the vast majority of young players will not reach the holy grail of Wimbledon. Many will not even come close. And even if they do succeed in their investment, parents may find it all thrown back in their faces.

One of the abiding images of the child star Jennifer Capriati is not her flying across the courts, but her police mugshot, taken after her arrest for possession of marijuana in 1994. She reportedly refused to speak to her father for several years after she came off the circuit.

Winters thinks that for as long as parents turn on their television screens and see their children as the next Becker or Graf, it will be ever thus. "Tennis players are dysfunctional, the families are dysfunctional and other kids have got no identity," he says. "It just doesn't work."

Until now, buying a cheaper private healthplan has meant compromising on the amount of cover you get. But Primecare, a new policy from Prime Health, actually gives you comprehensive cover - at a budget price.

If you're buying a policy, ask yourself: does it cover alternative medicine, the homoeopathy or acupuncture? Does it give you immediate access to private treatment? Does it guarantee full payment of surgeons' and anaesthetists' fees? Will it fully cover out-patient consultations and tests?

Primecare gives you all this. For more details, call 0800 77 99 55 or fill in the coupon.

Prime Health
A member of the Standard Life Group

Would your health insurance company treat you like this?

Call Prime Health on 0800 77 99 55 or fill in the coupon.

Title _____ First name _____
PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS
Surname _____ Date of birth _____
Address _____ Postcode _____
Phone (inc. STD code) Day _____ Evening _____
Date of birth of the eldest person requiring cover _____
Cover required: Single ☐ Married ☐ Family ☐ Single parent family ☐
If you already have private medical insurance please state renewal date _____
Please post to (no stamp required) Prime Health Limited,
FREEPOST, 38 3942 Blackpool, Cheshire SK2 6YE. MO2 450 NG

Sporting names to make the feathers fly

One of the reasons for Tim Henman's popularity at Wimbledon, quite apart from his tennis playing, may well be his name - at least, according to Brian Coote, professor of nomenclature at Milton Keynes University.

"It's a name (that) many people can identify with," he tells me, as we relax over a double espresso in the college refectory. "Oh, and congratulations by the way on spelling espresso correctly just then. I get so fed up with people calling it expresso, as if the name was something to do with its speed of production. It's called espresso because it is expressed or produced under pressure. It couldn't be called expresso, anyway, because there is no letter 'x' in Italian. Although you can never be too sure of these things, because we are always told that there is no letter 'x' in French, yet one of the French players in Euro 96 was called Kiko, which has no less than two of them! Well, I suppose when one thinks of all the

names in French history that do begin with the letter 'k', like Kleber and Kellermann ... I'm sorry. Where were we?"

It is one of the features of Brian Coote's conversations that he gets so caught up in his train of thought that the train can take him miles from home within seconds of departure. To put it another way, he cannot stick to the point.

"Yes, Tim Henman. Odd name, Henman. But it means exactly what it says. Someone who looks after the hens. Way, way back in Tim Henman's ancestry is someone who actually did look after hens."

"Lots of people still have names based on an ancestor's job, and they belong to one of the four main groups of surnames, the group which is named after professions. Some of these names are extremely common - Smith, Carter, Porter, and so on. Most of them refer to quite old professions, so you don't get many surnames like Salesman and Rep, or Photographer, though of course you



Myles Kington

get older versions of those like Seller and Painter. The only names I have come across containing more modern jobs, curiously enough, were Indian names. Do you remember one Indian cricketer called Contractor? And another called Faroukh Engineer? Oddly modern names. Incidentally, it's also odd how many politicians have these profession-based names. Apart from all the Clarkes and Fowlers and Archers, the leaders too have the same sort of name. John Smith and Thatcher and Major and now, of course, Jimmy Galsworthy ... I'm sorry. Where were we?"

A long way from the point,

back to which I gradually steered him again.

"Yes, Henman. Oddly, the last two English players who did well at Wimbledon also had names based on jobs: Roger Taylor and Sue Barker. So all the people who have that kind of name will identify with Henman, but he will also get sympathetic vibrations from other people with names of animals in their surnames."

Are there any?

"Are there any? My dear boy, they are all over the place! Even the leader of one of our major parties has an animal's name."

Has he? Who? Let's think ... Not Major, not Blair, not Ashdown ... Trimbly? Is that it? Is a trimbly a kind of dog or something?

"Alex Salmond, of course, the leader of the Scottish National Party. The 'd' oo the end is a bit odd, but that's a salmon all right. Then there's Sir Marcus Fox, and Lady Buck, and Douglas Hogg, and ... and ..."

Sensing that he was running out of examples, I dug into my

mental showbiz database and came up with James Whale, and Donald Swann, and Ray Gosling.

"Ray Gosling! Very good! And Donald Duck, of course! No, hold on, you can't count him. He actually was a duck."

By the way, talking of Sue Barker, what was a Barker? A fairground Barker, that sort of thing?

"No, no, no. A Barker was a kind of tanner, can't remember her why now off-hand, and also a chap who stripped trees, for obvious reasons. Another politician with a job name, by the way, is Mellor."

Really? What did a mellor do?

"Gathered hooey, of course. Incidentally, looking down the England football team I see a scattering of interesting professions there. Shearer - man who did the shearing. Seaman - a sailor. And Le Tissier must mean something vocational in French - hand me that French dictionary, dear boy ..."

But I had already made an excuse and left.

the commentators

Two defectors, two press portraits: 'Howarth' as the man of conscience, 'Emma' as the wicked witch. When will women get equal treatment?

Women are treated worse by the press than men—the news will hardly make you choke on your mussels. An influential group of women in print, called Women in Journalism (WJ), celebrates its first anniversary by publishing research comparing the press treatment of women and men. Yes, they find, women are sadly treated.

Their prime example is the defection of two Tory MPs—Alan Howarth and Emma Nicholson. They called her a "wicked witch", "frightful bitch", "menopausal", "vain and silly", "muddled pseudo-feminist" and even "not the first woman to fall for Ashdown's charms" (while the *Daily Mail*, of course, went straight for her private life and found a wronged wife). She was throughout called "Emma", though nobody called Howarth "Alan", a revealing and patronising habit in all the press—viz Virginia, Gillian and Harriet.

So "Emma" endured scorn and vindictiveness, jokes about her voice and appearance, while Mr Howarth, though vilified by some Tory papers, escaped any personal abuse, comments on his appearance or investigation of his private life. The worst he got was from the *Sun*: "batty", "bizarre" and "eccentric".

It was not just the tabloids. Consider the magisterial Hugo Young, grand old buffer of the *Guardian*. The Howarth Testament intimates itself into the party bloodstream and will dominate its body politic at Blackpool. (He will be the subject of all consciences. Other decent Tories should listen to him and wake up.)

But what did Archbishop Young have to say of the MP of conscience who did listen and wake up? "Emma Nicholson is an admirable woman but not a serious politician. Her defection is a dramatic gesture, gratifying to her personal opinions and fulfilling a psychic need, but it will have the opposite effect from the one she wants to make." Now even if Ms Nicholson's brain were to be found

Hero or villain? It depends on your sex



POLLY TOYNBEE

inferior to Mr Howarth's, what's all this "psychic need" and "dramatic gesture" stuff? Just up-market code for silly, vain and menopausal. (In case you were wondering, yes, the *Independent* can be smug. We ran a rousing defence of Ms Nicholson, denouncing her sexist detractors.)

Most news decisions are still taken by men. Eighteen out of the 19 national and Sunday papers are edited by men. Most newsrooms still feel heavily male-dominated, testosterone-driven, with laddishness oozing from the very templates of what makes news. Much of the sexism runs as if written into newspaper word-processing programs. Hit the right buttons on the terminal, and out pops "attractive brunette", "fun-loving vivacious blonde", "well-groomed granny" and all the rest of the clichés that diminish women of every rank and profession by com-

menting on their appearance and character.

So far, so good. All except chauvinist pigs can agree on this. Does it matter? Market researchers tell us that readers detect most of it, as these days they are sceptical and sophisticated in the arts of deconstructing all forms of bias, sexism and mendacity in journalism and advertising. Perhaps. Though it only takes listening to a phone-in to start

tearing your hair out at the things people believe because they have read them in the papers.

And if readers are so damned clever, why do most read such terrible newspapers? But the mysteries of newspaper buying habits, much brooded on by us and every other organ, do indeed baffle.

What makes so many women buy the *Sun*, even when they say overwhelmingly that the *Sun* is worst on women? What makes an intelligent person read the near-tabloid *Times*—because it is dirt cheap, when four other broadsheets offer twice the quality for only a few pence more?

But journalists are not allowed to grumble about the readers, any more than politicians are supposed to complain about the stupidity of the voters.

When it comes to standards, WJ has a serious problem which it

acknowledges elyptically. There are now several women news editors and much of the copy is written and subbed by women. The onward march of women through the ranks of journalism has not been marked by a noticeable improvement in fairness, decency or honesty. Quite the reverse. What a blow it was that the *News of the World* should be the first national with a female editor—just as Margaret Thatcher's emergence was not quite what the sisters had in mind when calling for more women in power.

Casting a look around the packed room at the last WJ party, there were a great many influential women: star writers, deputy, assistant and associate editors. They don't run the show—yet—but this group is not a flock of alternative feminists bleating from the sidelines. A leading light is Eve Pollard, former editor of the *Sunday Mirror*

and the *Sunday Express*; she is just one of many women now at the heart of the press establishment.

So, the question has to be asked: do women bring to journalism any better values than men? If they are no better, who cares if they get their trotters in the trough alongside the lads of the press? Personally I couldn't give a fig if the editor of the *Mail* was a woman or a man, unless the *Mail* changed its anti-women and other beastly ways. Many members of WJ may be what they call, mysteriously, "post-feminist"—foot-loose and value-free? I hope not.

Women in Journalism is still finding its feet intellectually. Its leading members are awkwardly aware of the dilemma, as they survey a room full of women who work for every sort of scurrilous rag. How do you build sisterly solidarity out of that? The research they published yesterday takes them one important step into the realm of pressing for higher standards, at least for the treatment of women by the press. Next step—a code of ethics for the treatment of everyone.

Herbie taught me, then I ate him

Roger Scruton is sure that animals have no rights. He proves this to Andrew Brown

Roger Scruton believes that the best way for an animal to die is normally to be killed by a larger animal. That is as quick as possible, and almost by definition less painful than the lingering death from starvation and disease which awaits most predators. This is an insight to provoke thought if you let it, so the first thing I asked him was whether his argument from size makes whales the most miserably constituted of all the animal kingdom.

"That's a very good point. In fact I am sure that it is the reason why, quite irrationally, people consider the hunting of whales to be intrinsically cruel, as our own government said it is at the International Whaling Commission. The animal rights position has great plausibility because of the size of the victim. Yet as *Moby Dick* shows—and it's interesting that the greatest American novel is also a great vindication of whaling—the whalers themselves make a distinction between virtuous and vicious ways of killing whales. And people who try to solve the question purely by reference to the whale ignore the fact that there are whole human communities that are dependent on it. So you end up with very deleterious human outcomes and possibly very deleterious ecological outcomes."

Saying this, he had risen to pace around his farmhouse, and now paused for a moment, groping for an ecological argument. "They eat a hell of a lot of plankton," he concluded. There is no length to which he will not go in his hunt to the sacred cows of modern thought.

Tall, springy, upright, his red hair sprinkled with grey, he walked with me across the fields of his small Wiltshire farm to where his hunters, George, Sam and Rollo, grazed. They appear in the foreword to the pamphlet: "I am indebted to creatures who have no idea of the fact," writes

Scruton, along with "the nameless carp in the pond across the field, the cows next door, and Herbie, who has now been eaten."

So I asked about Herbie. He was a lamb, belonging to the farmer next door, who was savaged by a fox, rescued and nursed back to health. He became something of a family pet; though this did not stop him being killed and eaten when his time came. This, said Scruton, was an illustration of the proper attitude towards domesticated animals. In a state of nature, the savaged Herbie would have died horribly from his injuries. That he lived was an illustration of the wider fact that many of the animals in the world today are only alive because humans have bred them and safeguarded them from predation, starvation and disease. "From all these calamities, animals gain relief and protection, when we decide to offer it," argues his pamphlet. "But this offer is not made without a motive, and we should work to keep that motive alive."

"By eating meat, drinking milk, wearing leather and furs, even by shooting and angling, we may, if circumstances are right, reinforce the desire to alleviate the unkindnesses of nature. And if it is said that we do so only to replace them with unkindnesses of our own, let it also be said that there is a moderation and control in human unkindness of which nature knows nothing."

The slightly ponderous, carefully measured rhetoric of his pamphlet is not at all the way he speaks. In some ways the writing is clearer. But it quite misses the fun of the man. Most philosophical arguments about how we should live give the impression that they are conducted by people who wouldn't know two if it jumped them over a five-barred gate. Scruton is not like that. He believes contact with nature is proper to people, and so he lives mostly in the country; not



the wilderness, but the green, English country. At the bottom of his fields is a pond, stocked with carp. I thought when first he said this that they were ornamental, but no, they are ordinary, carp-coloured carp, which he allows serious anglers to fish for. He eats the results.

Although he understands that the huntsman and the fisherman are often sincerely concerned to minimise the suffering of the animals they pursue, he does not think that suffering should be the yardstick of our response to animals. "It is not enough to suffer to gain rights. You can only have rights if you are a person." Animals, he says, obviously have beliefs and feelings, but they cannot have rationality.

I told him about a conversation I had had with Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, an American who has trained chimpanzees to be more proficient in symbolic language than anyone had thought possible. I had asked her whether she had ever offered her pupils a sign for "beautiful", or for "God", and she said that she never had, but

she might in future, for she had come to believe they might have a use for them. This did not seem to him interesting, because it could only tell us whether chimpanzees were capable of becoming rational beings. It told us nothing new

about the definition of a rational being, which he had already sorted.

"Language is what allows us to see our own interests as only one among many. The calculus of rights and duties which emerges from this is what really distinguishes us from animals and makes us persons."

"Animals have no right to be treated in one way rather than another. But it is still wrong to treat them as only a cowardly or vicious person would"

context to context. In war on-collared people do things which only callous people could do outside wartime. Decent people can disagree about what is or is not callous, as they do in the case of angling, or hunting. But when this happens, the law should not take sides."

That does not mean the law should never take sides. He gives the example of bear-baiting, or dog-fighting, which he says, are rightly outlawed because parliament concluded

that the pleasure taken in them was excessively sadistic, in a way which is not true, for example, of angling. "If there were a sport, exactly like angling except that the fish were lifted from the water and then tortured with hooks to the amused shrieks of the bystanders, we should regard it in 'quite another moral light from the sport of angling.' Although he is in no doubt that catching fish must cause them considerable pain and fear, he points out that this is not the purpose of the exercise. "The suffering involved is necessary in that it could be avoided only by destroying the sport."

However, he refuses to express an opinion on bull-fighting because, he says, he does not know enough about the facts of the case. Even the other great Spanish animal sport of chucking donkeys off church towers does not seem to him wholly unredeemed. It is not, after all, such a terrible death for the donkey. It may be better than dying of natural causes. Better even for humans, perhaps, than dying of some-

The philosopher on horseback: 'decent people can disagree about what is or is not callous'

Photograph: John Voos

thing natural like cancer.

For it is one of the distinctive features of Scruton's approach that he almost finds it easier to justify battery farming than medical experimentation. He is not keen on either. Yet battery farming at least goes to feed people. Medical experimentation serves often to prolong life wrongly. "In comparison with the average farm animal, a human being has a terrible end. Kept alive too long, by processes which nature never intended, we can look forward to years of suffering and alienation, the only reward for which is death—a death which as a rule comes too late, for anyone else to regret it."

There is in that rhetoric more than an echo of the faith in nature which he generally distrusts. The animal rights movement he regards as a polluted form of religion. "There is a deficit of real religion in the modern world, but no drying up of the fund of religious emotion. So we get in the animal rights movement a kind of incoherent collective urge towards the final solution of an ethical problem."

The effortless goading in the use of "final solution" gives one a glimpse of how he became famous. He would not treat a bull with the maddening contempt he can bring to his human opponents. Yet he sym-

pathises with what he sees as the religious roots of the animal rights movement. "One of the reasons for it is a revulsion from a wholly exaggerated sense of our own importance."

This attitude, for him, is an example of "piety, an impression of our smallness and an impression of the other thing's greatness." An arm swings around to encompass the whole valley we stand in. And then he finishes in a great flourish that is an entirely characteristic mixture of showing off and showing us the world: "To lose this feeling of piety would put us in conflict with our own species-nature or species-being as Marx calls it. Our position as modern people is very complicated. I don't deny that. We are, a great many of us, sceptical towards religious doctrine, but this doesn't suffice to extinguish the source of religious feeling. That is one reason why we have to be clear about the issues where this conflict comes to the surface. The worst thing that can happen to us is when people allow religious feeling to flare up in a non-religious form. That explains Nazism and Communism; and I would see something of that in the animal rights movement."

'Animal Rights and Wrongs' by Roger Scruton is published today by Demos, £7.95

The White Paper on legal aid brings new limits to access to the courts, argues Patricia Wynn Davies

Gate to law closes tighter

The Government, as yesterday's White Paper on legal aid makes crystal clear, wants to discourage people from resorting to the expensive business of going to law.

As Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, put it in a recent speech: "We need to encourage people to take a robust approach to life and accept that not every knock requires a legal response."

That is advice not to be lightly disregarded. Pursuing even a straightforward claim in the courts is often disproportionately expensive result actually achieved. No, litigation is not for the unwary. And yes, no one likes having to pay for lawyers and some people prefer to drop their potential legal claim and buy a holiday instead.

There is a difference, however, between reaching a decision and having virtually no choice at all. Lord Woolf's civil justice reforms, to be unveiled next month, are designed to unravel the system more client-friendly rather than lawyer-friendly. Over recent years, large numbers of middle-income people, progressively excluded from civil legal aid by cuts in eligibility, have all but lost that power of choice. They are too well-off to qualify for legal aid, even with contributions to costs from their own funds, but not well-off enough to fund their cases on their own.

Far from addressing that problem, yesterday's paper moves in precisely the opposite direction with a proposal to put people on the poverty line in a similar, unenviable position. The Government wants to give people a "stake" in their own cases—and hopefully to persuade them, like the middle-income groups, not to go to law. To do this it would increase contributions to the costs of people bringing cases and abolish the existing protection that unsuccessful assisted people have from the usual rule that losers pay their opponents' legal costs.

Those on low incomes already struggle to pay contributions and are unlikely to risk a potential doubling of their liability, which will be repayable in some cases by years of monthly instalments. As the Government's own research shows—in a report from the Legal Aid Board slipped out a fortnight ago after a lengthy delay—the change will mean one thing: an increase in the number of people who decline offers of legal aid.

That will be music to the ears of Gary Streeter, the new Lord Chancellor's Department junior minister, who has dubbed assisted persons

"state-funded Rottweilers" because he believes the system is too weighted in their favour.

The current setup—and some manifestly poor decisions by the Legal Aid Board, which administers the civil scheme—has certainly given ministers plenty of bullets to fire. A string of high-profile names with chequered

The package brings a disincentive for those least able to assert their rights themselves

histories—Asil Nadir, Darius Guppy, Peter Clowes, Roger Levitt—have been beneficiaries of the seemingly bottomless pit that is legal aid, prompting a clampdown on "apparently wealthy" claimants with substantial assets in bricks and mortar.

But let us take another example from the Government's own research: an unemployed man on £63 a week invalidity benefit who turned down

legal aid because he could not afford a £5-a-week contribution.

There are not going to be many Rottweilers at the bottom of the pile. None of this means that there is no need to tighten the rules. But a tighter test of merit, or as the paper now puts it, "deservingness", alone would have solved most of the problem of waste.

Nor does it mean that there is no costs injustice to some opponents of assisted people, only that the problem could be tackled in another way. Opponents can already get their costs paid by the Legal Aid Board where they would suffer "severe" financial hardship. That test could be softened to allow for hardship instead of severe hardship. That would cost a few more millions than the Treasury would like to spend, but only about 6 per cent of legally aided people (about 25,000) lose their cases. Yet more bureaucracy to extract ever-greater contributions from people of modest means is taking a sledge-hammer to crack a nut.

It all began rather differently with last year's Green Paper, when the accent was on improving access to justice. While opposition to the proposed introduction of pre-determined bud-

gets—the law's first encounter with rationing—remains, even some of the Government's most ardent critics were prepared to back the ending of the system of paying solicitors hourly rates. Instead law firms and specialist agencies meeting quality criteria would tender for block contracts, with cash then being concentrated on the best practitioners. While many solicitors were busy protesting at this latest inroad into their traditional practices, the Government was quietly claiming credit for proposing reforms that would raise quality.

But the support Lord Mackay might have had for his original plans will have been significantly eroded by the final upshot. His earlier suggestion that the existing advice and assistance scheme for welfare cases might be extended to cover representation in a wider range of tribunals has been firmly stamped upon. The package is supposed to appeal to middle England. But out, too, has gone a suggestion that legal aid be used to finance loans for middle-income groups to bring cases, on condition that they covered the costs of their opponents if they lost. In comes a disincentive for those least able to assert their rights themselves.

The title "Striking the Balance" says it all. And for the poorest people in society, the balance is swinging too far the other way.

YANKS CALL HOME
Special 4th July Promotion
(Just 12p* a minute all day)

Destination	First Telephone	R.E.	Serve %
USA	£1.18	£3.80	69%
India	£7.29	£12.70	43%
Canada	£1.65	£3.80	57%
Australia	£2.23	£5.90	62%
South Africa	£4.70	£8.20	43%
Germany/France	£2.11	£2.96	29%
Nigeria	£7.05	£11.05	35%
Hong Kong	£4.11	£7.30	44%
Pakistan	£9.16	£12.60	27%

(Price comparison based on a 10 minute call)

* No Access Charge to our Exchange

* Savings to 100's of countries

* No start-up costs, membership or joining fees

* Operators available, 24hrs a day, 7 days a week

* Toll quality

FREEPHONE

0800 376 66 66

BT

BEFORE YOU PHONE THE WORLD, PHONE US.

Globally Speaking - a service provided by First Telephone plc licensed Carrier.

*First Telephone tariffs shown are weekend rates inclusive of VAT. British Telecom tariffs shown are weekday rates inclusive of VAT. All charges current as of April 1986.

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES									
STERLING			DOLLAR			D-MARK			
Country	Spot	1 month 3 months	Country	Spot	1 month 3 months	Country	Spot	1 month 3 months	
US	1.5522	5-1 8-5	1000	1000	1000	0.6549			
Canada	2.2522	11-3 20-37	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
Germany	2.2022	11-3 140-130	13670	20-1	84-81	0.8891			
France	8.0324	32-18 39-34	13623	75-58	107-37	1.3007			
Italy	2.0222	48-28 228-218	13622	44-41	123-125	1.0058			
Japan	171.30	70-26 226-218	13622	44-41	123-125	7.2284			
Spain	1.2320	5-11 45-40	13621	11-1	25-25	0.2076			
Belgium	1.4921	2-7 35-31	13621	9-5	20-20	0.20325			
Denmark	0.954	12-6 146-125	13622	85-85	70-70	0.3523			
Netherlands	0.554	12-6 146-125	13622	35-32	107-107	0.4100			
Ireland	0.924	7-3 30-14	13621	4-7	52-77	0.4256			
Norway	1.0320	12-6 146-125	13622	23-27	114-122	0.4107			
Sweden	0.954	12-6 146-125	13622	23-27	114-122	0.4107			
Switzerland	1.4921	2-7 35-31	13621	9-5	20-20	0.20325			
Australia	1.5522	5-1 8-5	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
New Zealand	1.5522	5-1 8-5	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
Hong Kong	1.5522	5-1 8-5	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
Malaysia	1.5522	5-1 8-5	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
Singapore	1.5522	5-1 8-5	13637	20-1	2-0	0.8891			
OTHER SPOT RATES									
Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar				
Argentina	125.45	0.0387	Nepal	125.83	0.0390				
Australia	1.5522	0.8891	Philippines	125.83	0.0390				
Brazil	1.5522	0.8891	Portugal	125.83	0.0390				
Canada	2.2522	1.3007	Romania	125.83	0.0390				
France	8.0324	1.3007	Saudi Arabia	125.83	0.0390				
Germany	2.2022	0.8891	South Africa	125.83	0.0390				
Italy	2.0222	1.0058	Taiwan	125.83	0.0390				
Japan	171.30	7.2284	Thailand	125.83	0.0390				
Spain	1.2320	0.20325	Turkey	125.83	0.0390				
Sweden	0.954	0.4107	USA	125.83	0.0390				
Switzerland	1.4921	0.20325	UK	125.83	0.0390				
USA	1.5522	0.8891	Yugoslavia	125.83	0.0390				
UK	1.5522	0.8891							
Interest Rates									
Country	Bank	Discount	Country	Bank	Discount				
US	5.75%	2.50%	UK	8.75%	1.00%				
France	5.00%	2.00%	Japan	5.00%	0.50%				
Germany	5.00%	2.00%	Switzerland	5.00%	0.50%				
Italy	5.00%	2.00%	Sweden	5.00%	0.50%				
Japan	5.00%	0.50%	Denmark	5.00%	0.50%				
Sweden	5.00%								
Bond Yields									
Country	5 yr	10 yr	yield %	Country	5 yr	10 yr	yield %		
US	7 1/8	7 3/8	7 1/8	Netherlands	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
UK	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	France	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
Japan	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	Germany	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
Australia	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	Italy	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
Canada	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	Spain	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
France	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	Sweden	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
Germany	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8	Switzerland	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8		
Italy	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
Japan	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
Sweden	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
Switzerland	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
UK	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
USA	8 1/8	8 1/8	8 1/8						
Money Market Rates									
Interbank	Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months				
Sterling	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
US	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Japan	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Germany	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
France	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Italy	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Spain	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Sweden	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Switzerland	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
UK	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
USA	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8	5 1/8				
Life Insurance Futures									
Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Settlement price				
Long Gilt	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
German Bond	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK Gilt	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Italian Bond	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
3M Euro Yen	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
3M Euro Mark	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
ECU	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
US SP	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
FTSE 100	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
FTSE 200	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
US Dollar	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Life FTSE Index Option									
Settlement price: 37.00	37.00	Closing offer price	37.00						
Series	81/73	45/26	16/52						
July	96/54	65/53	41/78						
Aug	121/64	50/73	65/68						
Sept	140/69	100/67	84/73						
Oct									
Commodities									
INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange									
Commodity	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
Aluminum	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Copper	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Lead	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Nickel	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Platinum	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Palladium	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Silver	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Gold	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
PRECIOUS METALS									
Commodity	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
Gold	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Silver	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Platinum	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Palladium	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Gold	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
AGRICULTURAL									
Commodity	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
Wheat	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Corn	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Soybeans	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Canola	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Wheat	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Corn	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Soybeans	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Canola	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
ENERGY									
Commodity	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
Oil	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Gas	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Coal	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Electricity	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
COMMODITY INDICES									
Index	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
US	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Japan	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Germany	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
France	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Italy	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Spain	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Sweden	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Switzerland	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
USA	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
100 Largest Insurance Funds									
Fund	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
US	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Japan	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Germany	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
France	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Italy	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Spain	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Sweden	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Switzerland	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
USA	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
GUIDE									
Index	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price	High/Low	Settlement price				
US	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Japan	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Germany	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
France	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Italy	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Spain	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Sweden	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
Switzerland	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
UK	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				
USA	100.47	100.26	100.55	100.55	100.55				

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098

Investment: Berkeley builds on its reputation 18
British Gas warns profits could halve 18
Market Report: TV saga nears final episode 19

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

US economy buoyant as dollar passes ¥110 barrier

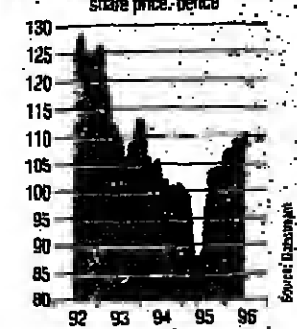
DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The dollar hit its highest level against the yen for two-and-a-half years yesterday, passing the psychological barrier of ¥110 as the Federal Reserve began a two-day policy meeting.

Even though most analysts do not think the Fed's open market committee will raise US interest rates after the meeting ends today, the strength of the economy means the next move is likely to be an increase.

Further evidence of the buoyancy of the American economy was provided yesterday by a surge in new house sales to the highest level since April 1986. They jumped 7.5

The Dollar's Recovery



per cent in May, following a 5.9 per cent increase in April.

In addition, the index of leading indicators rose 0.3 per cent in May. This was the fourth increase running in the index, which is meant to signal the strength of activity during the next six months.

However, Fed officials have been signalling that it is too early to be alarmed about the resurgence in growth, as inflation remains firmly under control. Most of Wall Street therefore expects the increase in interest rates to be postponed, possibly until after November's presidential election.

The Bank of Japan's quarterly meeting gave the US currency a further boost, ending yesterday with a signal that Japanese interest rates would not yet climb from their all-time low. Bank of Japan governor, Yasuo Matsuhashita, said: "The recovery needs to gain further momentum and spread wider to become self-sustaining."

Traders said nerves about the outcome of today's second round of voting in the Russian elections was also helping strengthen the dollar.

A minority of City economists believe there is a chance that the Chancellor Kenneth

Clarke will reduce British base rates by a further quarter point after this morning's meeting with Eddie George, governor of the Bank of England.

Although it is only a month since the last cut, by a quarter point to 5.75 per cent, evidence that the economy is gathering pace could make it harder to justify another reduction in the autumn.

"The Chancellor has got the bit between his teeth," said Geoffrey Dicks, UK economist at NatWest Markets.

The pound nevertheless strengthened alongside the dollar yesterday. It rose by

more than half-a-penny to end at DM2.3759.

According to market rumour, there has been a lot of speculative buying of the pound in recent weeks. However, Brownian Curtis, an economist at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, said there was also a genuine switch by investors in favour of sterling.

The currency moves follow the weekend's communiqué from the Group of Seven finance ministers, describing recent exchange rate developments as "positive and promising". It said exchange rate misalignments were "detrimental to trade and growth".

This left the currency markets puzzling over whether the ministers sought a further climb in the dollar's value against the yen.

The dollar has gained nearly 2 per cent against the Japanese currency in the past month, and is 36 per cent above its April 1995 record low of ¥80.63.

It had reached ¥110.07 by late morning in New York, up from the previous day's ¥109.68. The Dow Jones index was more than 25 points lower at 5704.86, partly reversing Monday's 75 point leap.

Comment, page 17

Fresh storm for water chiefs

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Yorkshire Water's beleaguered management yesterday ran into a new storm of criticism after an internal study concluded that they were not paid enough.

The recommendation threatens to rub salt into the wounds of customers who are still facing a hosepipe ban and the prospect of another drought-ridden summer and comes after hefty criticism of the group's management by Ofwat, the industry's regulator, in the wake of last year's water shortages.

The company's remuneration committee, chaired by Christopher Honeybourne, concludes in the company's latest annual report now going out to shareholders that top pay rates are "significantly out of line" with other parts of the industry and with the market in general.

Following a shake up in the group, Kevin Bond, chief executive of Yorkshire Water Services, is now one of the two most senior executives, earning £127,000 a year.

Yorkshire said the report would be discussed at the annual meeting on 25 July. However, the company has regarded its pay rates as being at the bottom of the league compared with other utilities. It is understood that the aim is to introduce a long-term bonus scheme "in the fullness of time", though no proposals will be put to shareholders at the annual meeting.

But the plans immediately came under attack. Sheffield Labour MP Helen Jackson, who chairs the all-party group on the water industry, claimed: "Customers and the workforce will be absolutely astonished with this conclusion."

Pete Bowler of the campaign group WaterWatch angrily rejected the report's conclusion. "You don't need to be a brilliant captain of industry to run a monopoly. You have to be absolutely bloody incompetent to run a water company at a loss."

Both Mr Bond and new chairman Brandon Gough seemed happy with their salaries on joining the group in recent months, he added.

Growing concerns: Controversial deal to create the world's most powerful airline grouping is being investigated again

BA-American alliance faces MPs' inquiry

MICHAEL HARRISON
and PATRICK TOOHER

An influential cross-party committee of MPs is to launch an investigation into British Airways' proposed alliance with American Airlines amid growing concern about the impact of the deal on competition across the Atlantic.

The inquiry, by the Commons' Transport Select Committee, is the fourth probe into the deal since BA and American unveiled their hugely ambitious plan last month, forging the most powerful airline alliance in the world.

The tie-up is already being examined by the Office of Fair Trading in Britain and the United States Justice Department. Today EU transport commissioner Neil Kinnock and competition commissioner Karel van Miert will announce that Brussels is also investigating the deal, along with five other alliances between American and US carriers.

News of another inquiry into the proposed deal came as Richard Branson's Virgin At-

lantic rejected the creation of an independent tribunal to protect smaller airlines against uncompetitive behaviour from a BA-American alliance.

The proposal is expected to be put by the British Government negotiators during bilateral talks with their US counterparts which began in Washington yesterday.

But the idea was quickly dismissed by Virgin. BA's only UK-based long-haul rival. "To link the creation of an independent tribunal to a deal with American Airlines that gives BA 60 per cent of the transatlantic market to and from London is not something we are in favour of," said Virgin spokesman Will Whitehorn.

"There should be some form of mechanism to promote competition and look after consumers' interests," he added. "It's long overdue. We've been arguing for an 'Ofair' regulator ever since BA's dirty tricks campaign four years ago."

The latest enquiry by MPs comes as BA prepares to submit its formal response to the OFT later this week.

It will argue strongly that the alliance, under which BA will pool revenues and services with American, will mean greater competition and lower prices.

Critics, led by Mr Branson, claim the two airlines' dominance of transatlantic traffic in and out of London will allow them to unfairly dominate the market.

The Transport Select Committee, chaired by Sir Paul Channon, a former Secretary of State for both Transport and Industry, will take evidence from BA, American and Virgin next Wednesday. The rival US carrier, Delta Airlines, will give evidence the following Monday.

And a transport minister, probably the Secretary of State Sir George Young, will also be called before MPs. The committee intends to complete its investigation before parliament rises for the summer recess at the end of this month.

Robert Ayling, BA's chief executive, yesterday rebutted the claims made by Mr Branson and insisted the alliance would benefit competition. "This is not a consumer issue because it is absolutely clear they will be better off," he said. "The issue is does Britain want to be a major competitor in the global airlines system or not. We can take it with both hands or we can miss the boat."

He also described proposals for an independent tribunal to monitor the BA-American as "imaginative". But the tribunal would protect smaller airlines from any future abuses by BA and American of their dominant position whereas the OFT is examining whether the alliance as



Pressure: BA chief executive Robert Ayling claims the deal will give the two airlines a smaller share of a larger market

stands should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Mr Ayling forecast that the deal would result in BA and American having a smaller share of a larger market.

The impact of the alliance on competition will inevitably be af-

fecting parallel talks going on between London and Washington to strike an open skies deal across the Atlantic. If the talks succeed it would give more US airlines greater access to BA's hub airport at Heathrow.

Comment, page 17

fecting parallel talks going on between London and Washington to strike an open skies deal across the Atlantic. If the talks succeed it would give more US airlines greater access to BA's hub airport at Heathrow.

Comment, page 17

Boots invests £300m in four-year growth drive

NIGEL COPE

Boots is to invest £300m in its Boots the Chemists chain over the next four years in a move that will see a marketing push for health and beauty products and new stores added in seven different sizes.

The company also announced a second trial of its Advantage, "smart card" loyalty scheme, though would not commit to a national roll-out.

The investment programme is part of Boots' strategy to underline the strength of the Boots brand and differentiate it from high street rivals.

It follows a period which has seen the supermarket groups expand aggressively into toiletries and health and beauty products while adding pharmacies to stores.

The strategy is designed to prevent the kind of market share erosion suffered by WH Smith after the supermarkets grabbed market share in books, magazines, music and videos.

"We recognise the threat of the supermarkets. It is time to move the game on," said Steve Russell, managing director of

Boots the Chemists.

In the company's first presentation on its core business for three years, Boots said it is planning a major refurbishment for many town centre stores, including 18 in central London this year.

Pharmacy sections will be re-designed adding areas for medical advice "booths". Multi-media kiosks will be introduced to provide more information on product areas such as skincare and oral hygiene.

A dozen new edge of town sites will open in the next two years. A further 240 sites have been identified for small stores, of which 40 will open this year.

The number of outlets at Heathrow Airport will be doubled from four to eight.

Other stores will be tailored to their local market, such as "travel" stores at airports and railway stations, which will focus on sunscreens and other travel and holiday-related items.

All 1228 stores will be tailored to a specific format in the next 2-3 years.

It is also intended to reinforce the "added value" of the Boots pharmacy offer at a time when Asda is mounting a continued attack on the price of non-prescription medicines.

Boots made no announcement on its international expansion plans though a move into Holland had been rumoured. Boots will open its first branch in Dublin in the Autumn.

Though the company is considering opening stores in continental Europe its ambitions may be limited by legal restrictions.

Boots plans to build a portfolio of "power brands" to add to its No 7 cosmetics range and Solman suntan lotion. The Natural Collection range of toiletries will be built upon.

The Advantage loyalty card trial which was launched in 13 stores last October in the Norwich area will now be complemented with a second trial with a lower rate of discount.

Boots said the participating stores enjoyed a sales uplift of 3 per cent, enough to make the card pay.

Few analysts have changed their profits forecasts and the shares edged 3p ahead at 587p.

London copper trader suspends staff in Tokyo

NIC CICUTTI

The first cracks within the London copper market in the wake of the £1.2bn trading losses incurred by Sumitomo Corporation began to emerge yesterday after Rudolf Wolff, a highly respected member of the London Metal Exchange, announced that it had suspended three of its Tokyo staff.

Rudolf Wolff yesterday refused to give any further details of the suspensions, which followed the spectacular losses forced on Sumitomo by its rogue copper trader Yasui Hamanaka.

A Wolff spokesman said: "Naturally we are co-operating, as are all brokers who have had any dealings with Sumitomo, with the appropriate regulatory authorities."

"We have 130 years of tradition behind us and Rudolf Wolff would never tolerate any behaviour which is not impeccable."

The problem, if there was one, was isolated to the Tokyo office where Japanese business accounted for less than 4 per cent of all Wolff's world-wide revenue, the spokesman added.

A London trader said yesterday: "I think this sort of news scares claims that Hamanaka acted alone in his unauthorised dealings. This is something not just confined to our Japanese friend."

Another source said: "I would be surprised if this is the only set of suspensions and interventions by big firms that we are likely to see. Hamanaka was working with too many people for this to be an isolated case."

The suspensions followed news of expanding inquiries into the Sumitomo scandal in the United States, amid growing concern that the company might know more than it was telling UK and US investigators.

One report in New York suggested the US market regulator, the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, was ready to issue a formal complaint against Sumitomo if the company continues to block its investigations.

Regulators and fraud investigators want to know how far Hamanaka might have acted alone or whether there may have been a price-rigging cartel.

On Monday, the FBI entered the world-wide inquiry by

demanding telexes, faxes and other documents linked in Sumitomo and Hamanaka from David Threlkeld, the Vermont-based metals trader who first tried to blow the whistle on the Japanese dealer in 1991.

Mr Threlkeld said the FBI request was probably linked to a grand jury probe by Manhattan's US Attorney's Office into Sumitomo. A trader, Global Minerals and Metals Corporation, has already been subpoenaed to give evidence.

Last month, Vincent Zucarelli, a former Commodities Exchange (Comex) independent trader, filed a class action complaint against Sumitomo and Hamanaka, and also against two US traders, Global and Birch Brokerage. The complaint alleged they manipulated Comex and LME copper markets to levels higher than they would otherwise have been.

Fears that the scandal may spread to include other firms in Japan, the US and the UK, helped to depress copper prices yesterday, which fell below the threshold of \$1,900 before consumer bargain-hunting kicked in to lift it back above that level.

Head resigns as CS Holdings cuts 5,000 jobs

NIC CICUTTI

A row within the board of CS Holding, the Swiss banking giant, burst into the open yesterday as Josef Ackermann, president of its Credit Suisse subsidiary, resigned due to "differing views" on the same day as the bank announced a worldwide restructuring exercise involving 5,000 jobs cut.

The restructuring of CS Holding, which is number two in Switzerland after United Bank of Switzerland and the parent of Credit Suisse and CS First Boston, will cost \$F1bn (£500m). The bank will change its name to Credit Suisse Group in January next year.

At the same time, CS Holding chairman Rainer Gut, who courted controversy by suggesting a merger with rival UBS barely three months ago, will remain chairman of the new group.

CS Holding declined to enlarge on the reasons for the departure of Mr Ackermann, who had been president of the executive board at Credit Suisse and a member of the CS Holding board.

Lukas Muehleemann, who successfully restructured Swiss Reinsurance, will leave his chief executive's post there to take the helm at the restructured Credit Suisse Group.

The bank added that the job losses, including 3,500 in Switzerland, will happen over the next two to three years and will take place mainly by non-replacement of staff who leave.

At the end of 1995, CS Holding and its subsidiaries had a workforce of almost 24,000 in Switzerland and a further 10,000 operating world-wide.

In a key move, the group will be divesting non-core activities, chiefly a 44.9 per cent stake in Swiss engineering and electricity group Elektrowatt. The proceeds from its disposal will go towards the restructuring costs.

CS shares rose sharply in early trading on the Zurich bourse after the announcement yesterday morning.

Analysts welcomed the announcement as a big step towards transparency and focus from a company whose current mixed character had prompted some caution among investors.

Christoph Bieri, at Zurich Kantonalbank, said: "It is an extremely far-reaching restructuring that is very modern, the same direction that the other two big Swiss banks [UBS and Swiss Bank Corporation] are moving in."

Under the plan announced yesterday CS Holding will be realigning its businesses into four specialised and autonomous units.

The new divisions will be created from the group's existing financial companies - Credit Suisse, Swiss Volksbank, a Swiss domestic bank; Bank Leu, the private banking unit; Credit Suisse Financial Products and New York-based CS First Boston.

The four new units will be Swiss domestic banking, worldwide private banking, worldwide asset management and worldwide corporate and investment banking.

The company estimates the new structure, which will take effect on 1 January 1997, will slash annual costs by around £350m. From 1998, the plan will boost annual revenues by about the same amount.

"By this move, CS Holding will change from a Swiss bank with international activities to an international financial institution with headquarters and certain core businesses in Switzerland," the company said.

CS Holding, which is regularly ranked among the world's leaders in market activities such as bond issues or equity trading, had total assets of \$F412.7bn at the end of 1995.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FTSE 100	3725.70	+0.10	+0.0	3857.10	3639.50
FTSE 250	4376.00	+5.60	+0.1	4568.60	4015.30
FTSE 350	1878.80	+0.60	+0.0	1945.40	1816.60
FT All Share	2190.29	+0.64	+0.0	2244.36	1954.06
FT All Share	1863.54	+0.58	+0.0	1924.17	1791.95
New York	5712.62	-17.36	-0.3	5778.00	5032.94
Tokyo	22347.97	-107.52	-0.5	22866.80	19734.70
Hong Kong	11084.43	+81.82	+0.7	11584.99	10204.87
Frankfurt	2572.25	+8.25	+0.3	2573.69	2253.36

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond
1 Month	1 Year	1 Year	1 Month	1 Year	1 Year
5.75	6.31	7.91	5.75	6.31	7.91
5.75	6.31	7.91	5.75	6.31	7.91
5.75	6.31	7.91	5.75	6.31	7.91
5.75	6.31	7.91	5.75	6.31	7.91

CURRENCIES					
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/\$	£/DM	£/¥
1.5562	2.23	172	1.5562	2.23	172
1.5562	2.23	172	1.5562	2.23	172
1.5562	2.23	172	1.5562	2.23	172
1.5562	2.23	172	1.5562	2.23	172

السؤال الأول



COMMENT

What's all this talk about counter-parties? This is supposed to be a PEP isn't it? You know - the things invented by Nigel Lawson to encourage direct investment in the stock market.

These claims really are too good to be true

Never use the term "guaranteed return" is the rule of thumb traditionally applied by those selling investment products, for investment and guarantees are two things that very rarely mix. There's a whole new generation of PEPs now being marketed, however, which come pretty close to breaking this old taboo, so much so that they are generally referred to in the press and the trade as "money back guaranteed bonds". It is perhaps unfair to pick on the HSBC PEP Plus to demonstrate the perils of these products, for it is just one of many and it actually holds out the prospect of a better return than a good few of its competitors. But we have the prospectus to hand.

The HSBC PEP Plus is an offshore investment trust which promises to grow your money over five years in line with the FT-SE 100 share index. In addition it promises a 33 per cent bonus on top. In the event that the market falls, you get your money back. Sounds almost too good to be true, doesn't it, and indeed it is. According to the marketing material the product will "outperform any rise in the FT-SE 100 index" and will offer "100 per cent return of capital after five years". In the unlikely event of the FT-SE 100 index falling over five years "investors will receive a full return of their capital - not 95 per cent, or 90 per cent, but 100 per cent".

This is about as close as you ever get to a guarantee in investment products, but lamplight is anything to go by they are highly unlikely. Needless to say, the prospectus

"investment risks". There is a possibility of a counter-party defaulting, it tells us, in which case "no guarantee is given express or implied that shareholders will receive back the amount of their investment in shares". Oh dear.

But hold on a mo. What's all this talk about counter-parties? This is supposed to be a PEP isn't it? You know - the things invented by Nigel Lawson to encourage direct investment in the stock market? Isn't counter-party risk all to do with derivatives? Well yes. This PEP actually puts your money into a mixture of zero coupon bonds, CDs, FT-SE 100 call options etc. etc. Only don't talk about it too much or the Inland Revenue and others (ie an incoming Labour Government) might see it as the final straw and use it as an excuse for cracking down on the PEP industry as a whole.

One final thing. In most circumstances, you would actually be better off putting your money into a conventional tracker fund than this "guaranteed PEP". This is because the HSBC PEP Plus offers you only the capital growth on the FTSE plus 33 per cent, not the total return including dividends. A rough back of the envelope calculation reveals that as a result, the market would have to rise by more than 70 per cent over five years to beat a conventional tracker, or fall by more than 25 per cent.

Both these things are possible, but if history is anything to go by they are highly unlikely. Needless to say, the prospectus

doesn't mention this. But then if you pointed these things out, you might never sell a PEP.

Government is still at BA's bidding

It's an odd thing about British Airways, but it has always regarded the Government as a 100 per cent owned subsidiary at its beck and call. Privatisation and the onset of a limited amount of competition in the skies has failed to shake the airline in its belief that its own interests and those of the British people are one and the same thing.

To some extent this is an understandable thing, for in the airline business the term "national flag carrier" continues to mean something; landing rights are still jealously guarded national properties, carved up on a bilateral basis between national airlines. All the same, at a time when ministers and British Airways alike pay lip service to the idea of free competition and open skies, you would have thought it might have occurred to them that these days they might not always be bating on the same side. But no. The Department of Transport continues to trumpet the interests of British Airways as if Virgin, British Midlands and others never existed.

This is nowhere more apparent than in negotiations now taking place to allow British Airways to set up a code sharing arrangement with American Airlines. The US won't grant anti-trust immunity for the

deal unless the Brits allow open access to British airports for American carriers. So get on to it, British Airways orders the Department of Transport. Suddenly, the objections traditionally held by the DoT to an open skies policy with the US melt away, there's a flurry of activity and Sir Colin Marshall's poodles in government are jettisoned over to Washington to hammer out an accord.

So desperate is the DoT to do BA's bidding that it is now prepared to consider setting up an "Offair" to protect the interests of other airlines on the transatlantic routes, an initiative always resisted in the past. It would seem that the DoT is prepared to offer almost anything to get this monstrous new monopoly up and running. We exaggerate the position, of course, but there is something mighty suspect going on here. Normally even the tiniest airline deals are referred by the DoT to the Civil Aviation Authority for analysis. Not, apparently, in this case. It can only be presumed that the DoT thinks the outcome potentially too embarrassing to risk.

Keeping the dollar high will be tough

The dollar has finally cut loose from its lengthy association with the adjective "weak". It climbed above the symbolic ¥110 level yesterday, consigning last year's lows around ¥80 to the dustbin of history.

The three main currencies, dollar, yen and deutschmark, are now round about where their governments want them. The "orderly reversal" of the US currency's nosedive against the other two that G7 ministers called for in April 1995 has been accomplished. Japanese and German exporters are no longer in extreme pain they were hurt US exporters have not yet started complaining about the dollar's rise.

The problem is going to be sustaining this pattern. If the dollar strengthens further ahead of the US election in November, there will be a real danger of trade tensions. If it falls again, the tentative recoveries in Germany and Japan will be set back. The chances of keeping the key exchange rates roughly where they are now will depend partly on expected movements in interest rates. These look as though they will support the dollar at above ¥110. The US economy is gathering steam while the recoveries in Germany and Japan continue to look fragile. The odds are that German and Japanese rates will remain low until the autumn and probably longer. On the other hand, the Federal Reserve will raise US rates, election or not, if the strength of the American economy shows any sign of triggering wage pressures.

Keeping currencies at the right level is an even more nerve-wracking business than moving them away from the wrong one. Getting the dollar up from its lows was the easy bit. Keeping it where it is will be the real test of exchange rate management.

Chambers of Commerce: Business leaders agree to block 'back door' employment policies

Bosses back Government on EU's 48-hour week

MICHAEL HARRISON
Birmingham

Business leaders yesterday pledged to back the Government in its campaign to obstruct Brussels if it seeks to impose a 48-hour working week on British industry.

The move is set to heighten the stand-off between Britain and its EU partners over attempts to introduce social legislation by the "back door".

Ministers intend to play for time by refusing to move on an imminent ruling from the European Court of Justice, requiring Britain to implement the EU working time directive, which is being introduced under health and safety legislation. Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, yesterday told the British Chambers of Commerce annual conference in Birmingham that the Government would seek to resist the encroachment by the court on Britain's affairs and the "subterfuge" being used to impose the working time directive.

Rohin Geldard, president of the BCC, said business would support the Government's stance. "We would not be in

favour of breaking the law but the EU is effectively introducing this legislation through the back door and that is precisely the sort of thing it should not be doing. We would support the Government because imposing rigid rules like this is absolutely wrong."

He was speaking as delegates at the BCC's annual conference in Birmingham rejected the introduction of further social legislation, warning that it would undermine competitiveness, but backed the idea of a single European currency.

Under the working time directive, employers would have to allow rest breaks after six hours' work, four weeks' paid holiday, a maximum eight-hour shift for night work and at least one day off a week.

Graham Mather, president of the right-wing European Policy Forum and an MEP, said the European Commission had already abused its powers in the way the working time directive was introduced and the European Parliament's social affairs committee was now drawing up a list of 87 further measures to extend the role of works councils, boost collective bargaining



Defiant: Ian Lang says he will resist Brussels' 'subterfuge' Photograph: News Team

and include labour clauses in public works contracts. He urged Britain not to join a single currency in 1999 and said the message from the conference to Brussels must be: "Yes to competitiveness and employment, no to the Social Protocol."

However, Geoffrey Martin, head of the European Commission in Britain, said that the

debate over the social chapter had been overtaken by events. Both sides of industry were now sitting down to evolve and agree on a European social model while one of the aims of the Inter Governmental Conference would be to allow "flexible cooperation" in the way member states introduced standards of social protection. Earlier Mr Martin criticised

the Eurosceptics and their supporters in the right-wing press for arguing that Britain could operate as effectively outside Europe as part of a free trade area.

He said a single currency was now seen as a logical and necessary addendum to a single market, with enormous implications for Britain whether it joined or not.

Davies warns on inflation control

Low inflation must remain Britain's top economic priority whether or not sterling enters a single European currency in 1999, Howard Davies, deputy governor of the Bank of England, stressed yesterday, writes Michael Harrison.

Mr Davies also indicated that there was a strong case for giving the Bank independent status irrespective of whether Britain fully embraced economic and monetary union.

Whatever the outcome, it was essential that Britain was prepared and that meant, above all, keeping a tight control over monetary policy and inflation.

"In principle, the UK could prosper outside or inside. Our prosperity depends on the competitiveness of our businesses which, in turn, depends crucially on our productivity across the whole economy. We believe that that productivity can best be developed most effectively in an environment of low inflation," he told delegates to the BCC's annual conference.

If sterling were part of a single currency, it would put even greater emphasis on industry to control costs because devaluation would not be an option to shield uncompetitive companies.

If Britain did not switch to the euro then there would be an even greater obligation on it to achieve lower inflation because of the interest rate premium it would otherwise have to pay.

"Some argue that this points to the need for establishing independent status for the Bank outside the euro area, just as such a status is required by the treaty inside it. There may well be strong arguments for that. I couldn't possibly comment."

Mr Davies said the Bank believed some countries would have the "greatest difficulty" in meeting the convergence criteria but that some form of EMU involving a core group was likely.

The Bank stood ready, he said, to give practical advice to the business community on the transition to single currency because "in or out we may all have to learn to live with the euro".

Businesses oppose pre-election tax cuts

The Government was warned yesterday against pre-election tax cuts by business leaders fearful that they could wreck the stable economic climate being enjoyed by companies, writes Michael Harrison.

Robin Geldard, president of the British Chambers of Commerce, told the national conference that it was essential that politicians kept their heads and did not succumb to elec-

toral bribes as the election grows nearer.

"We certainly do not wish to see economic prudence cast to the wind for the sake of political expediency and we urge the Chancellor not to be seduced into a tax-cutting Budget which we cannot afford," he told delegates in his opening address.

Afterwards he said that the business vote was important

and if the Government wanted the support of the small and medium-sized businesses represented by the chambers it should resist the temptation to cut and run.

"A nice cut in income tax might look lovely but it is not justified by the economic figures and would do damage to what is the most stable economic background we have had almost this century."

He added that if the Government wanted to do something on tax it should simplify the way the tax system was administered to reduce the "terrifying" burden of regulation on companies.

Ambar Paul, chief executive of the metals group Caparo Industries, called on the Government to help bolster the country's manufacturing base. He gave a warning that

it was too small to generate the wealth needed to sustain standards of living, despite the improvements made in productivity.

To help industry, Mr Paul said the Government would have to ensure a stable currency, education and training in engineering skills, compulsory language training in schools and enhanced investment allowances.

Lloyd's set for profits of over £1bn

NIC CIGUTTI

Lloyd's of London, the troubled insurance market, is poised to announce profits of more than £1bn for the 1993 underwriting year, the first since its losses began to mount in 1987, according to Chatset, the independent analysts.

In addition, Lloyd's names will receive an extra £400m released by Equitas, the reinsurer rescue vehicle, of reserves from the closed years up to 1992, giving total returns of £1.4bn.

However, the additional £400m release by Equitas was yesterday condemned by the Lloyd's Names Associations' Working Party (LNAWP), the names' umbrella organisation. Christopher Stockwell, a

LNAWP spokesman said the money rightfully belonged to 1992 names, many of whom had been frozen out of being able to underwrite the following year by the huge reserves they were having to create.

"This blatant discrimination between names causes windfall profits for the agents and fortunate names who were able to carry on at the expense of those who were badly hit early on," Mr Stockwell said.

"To ignore the position is unreasonable and leaves the arrangements vulnerable to judicial review," he threatened yesterday.

Lloyd's is expected to announce its preliminary "global" results for the 1993 underwriting year on July 12. Earlier in-

ternal estimates had suggested profits of up to £900m, against higher estimates by Chatset. Charles Sturge, a director at Chatset, said yesterday that his organisation's figures were simply estimates and had not yet been validated. "But we think they are a reasonable account of what will be announced."

Chatset's estimates suggest that the "pure result" for 1993, made up of underwriting and investment profits less expenses,

will be £1.184bn minus agents' fees and commissions of £53m.

This implies an average total return to 1993 names of 15.8 per cent. Among the better returns, syndicates operating in the marine market returned averages of more than 20 per cent, with many rising above 25 per cent.

Among non-marine syndicates, some are likely to benefit even more from the Equitas reserves being released to 1993 names.

'MONEY' IN TODAY'S SECTION TWO

Corporate Bond PEPS - a £1.3bn flop? Page 12

Cheap and cheerful life insurance 13

Getting the best motor insurance 14/15

The best value plain paper fax you can get

With a Canon B100 fax machine, you get high quality plain paper faxes without the high price. For more details call free on 0500 246 246. If anyone can Canon can

The best value plain paper fax you can get

The best value plain paper fax you can get

The best value plain paper fax you can get

business

Berkeley builds on its reputation

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Tony Pidgley earned a reputation in the late 1980s for being something of a housing market guru. The managing director of upmarket housebuilder Berkeley went substantially liquid just as house prices were riding for a fall. During the subsequent five-year property slump Berkeley bucked the sector trend, delivering a period of profits, earnings and dividend growth backed by a cash-rich balance sheet.

Results for the year to April continued this enviable run. Pre-tax profits rose 15 per cent to £43.4m, on turnover 18 per cent higher at £334m. Earnings per share advanced a more modest 11 per cent to 34.8p, held back slightly by the dilution of February's £75m rights issue.

The secret of Berkeley's success lies, as with any good property business, in "location, location and location" and the company is benefiting from a trend towards the small town and city centre sites it specialises in.

The bulk of its business is building executive-style homes, often with joint venture partners such as Thames Water, in and around London, a region which has seen the biggest house price rises in recent months. Projects in the capital include schemes in Barnes, Hampstead and near St Paul's Cathedral.

As the chart below shows, 80 per cent of the 1,560 homes sold last year went for at least £100,000. The average selling price rose from £190,000 in £208,000, reflecting a shift towards more expensive homes rather than any significant upward movement in house prices, which are growing at about 4 per cent a year.

So much for the good news. Given Berkeley's impressive track record, when Mr Pidgley warns that activity in the housing market could stagnate in the run-up to the general election, commercial rivals and potential house buyers alike should take notice.

Assuming the Conservatives leave going in the country until the last possible moment next May, Berkeley reckons it could lose up to two months of sales worth £60m due to uncertainty about the election outcome and its consequences for interest rates and consumer confidence.

But Berkeley is cautious, and net reservations in the first two months were up a fifth on the same period last year. Whether Berkeley can maintain its momentum as political uncertainties increase remains to be seen, but with £35.6m of cash in the bank, it is better placed than most.

Merrill Lynch looks for pre-tax profits this year of £56m rising to £66.5m in 1997/98. That implies a PE ratio

falling from 16 to 13 with the high-flying shares closing 3p better yesterday at 617p. The executive homes market may not look so clever a year from now, so that is probably high enough.

Orange still has a bright future

Subscriber figures from two of the four mobile-phone operators, Vodafone on Monday and Orange yesterday, provoked quite different reactions. Vodafone, which offers analogue and digital services, added 106,000 net new subscribers in the second quarter of 1996, and the shares gained 3p. Orange, the all-digital start-up, doubled its subscriber base in the 12 months to June but saw its shares drop 5.5p to 219p.

Orange has actually performed roughly in line with expectations, taking a 9 per cent market share by the end of June. It expects to take this to 11-12 per cent by the end of the year, in keeping with its own forecasts, if lower than some of the more bullish ones.

New industries are notoriously difficult to analyse. The only real indicators for mobile phones are the rate at which companies attract new subscribers, how many subsequently disconnect from the service (churn), and how much they spend on their phones. Sixteen million users are forecast for 2005, so the market is plainly there and the question becomes, which operators will carve out a profitable market share?

Orange still looks impressive. There was particularly good news on the churn front, which has dropped from 18.1 per cent to about 17.6 per cent since last year, the best performance among the mobile operators. Vodafone, by contrast, is stuck at 25 per cent and Cellnet at 28 per cent. Orange has also held ground on revenues per subscriber, which are static at about £440 a year. For Vodafone, the figure has dropped to £484 from £520, for Cellnet, from £403 to £391.

The figures suggest that Orange has signed up a better class of user: reasonably heavy users, who pay on time. So why the share-price drop yesterday? Part of the answer lies in the normal volatility seen when a stock goes into

the FT-SE 100. At the same time, some investors are betting that Vodafone has begun to take on the lessons of Orange - excellent marketing, brand loyalty - and have switched to the market leader.

One day, mobile phones will look like any other price-sensitive commodity. Until then there is a good run to be had if investors choose the winners. Orange is likely to be one and probably didn't deserve yesterday's fall.

Marston scales up the risks

Marston, Thompson & Evershed has been one of the steady performers in the brewing sector throughout the 1990s with earnings growing at a solid if unspectacular pace. Throwing off a steady stream of cash has meant shareholders have enjoyed double-digit dividend rises for years and the shares have risen accordingly to yesterday's 332p.

Figures for the 53 weeks to the end of March produced more of the same. A 12 per cent increase in turnover to £171.6m translated into an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £27.3m. Earnings per share, up 4 per cent to 20.9p, covered the full-year dividend of 7.3p a healthy 3.4 times.

In the core brewing operation, Marston's premium bitter Pedigree suffered along with the rest of the cask ale sector from the introduction of so-called "smooth", creamy-head nitro-keg beers. Pedigree's 5.7 per cent sales decline to national account customers, however, was a better showing than the 8 per cent average fall registered by its rivals.

Difficult trading in brewing was nicely counterbalanced by a 25 per cent rise in retail profits driven by food sales in the 234-strong managed pub estate. The focus with Marston, though, has shifted from the group's steady underlying trading to an ambitious expansion plan which started last week with the acquisition of the London-based, Richer & Pano, bar chain for £20m. With only seven sites so far, that price looks extremely full, confirming anecdotal evidence that the scramble to jump on the branded-bar bandwagon is leading to some pretty fancy ratings.

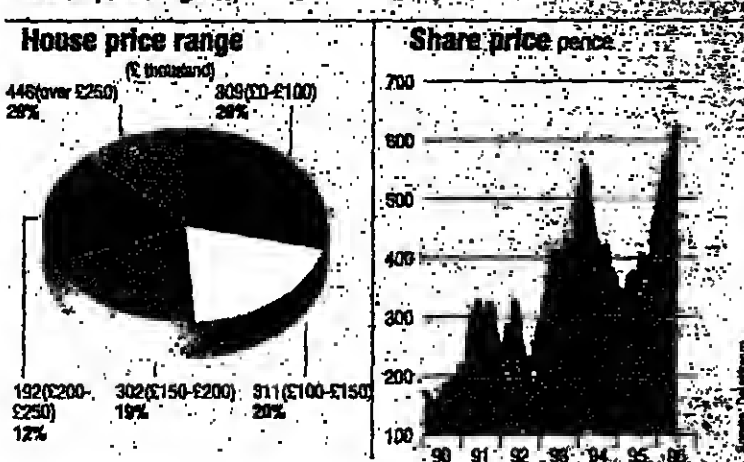
David Gordon, managing director, is already gearing up for another acquisition so investors will be forgiven for worrying that the company's risk profile has increased by a sizeable margin. On forecast profits two years out of £32.5m, the shares stand on a forward P/E of 13. High enough given the uninspiring growth and higher risks.

Berkeley Group: at a glance

Market value: £2.07bn, share price 378p

Five-Year record	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Pre-tax profits (£m)	12.6	15.8	25.8	37.8	43.4
Dividends per share (pence)	4.9	5.8	6.8	7.3	7.3

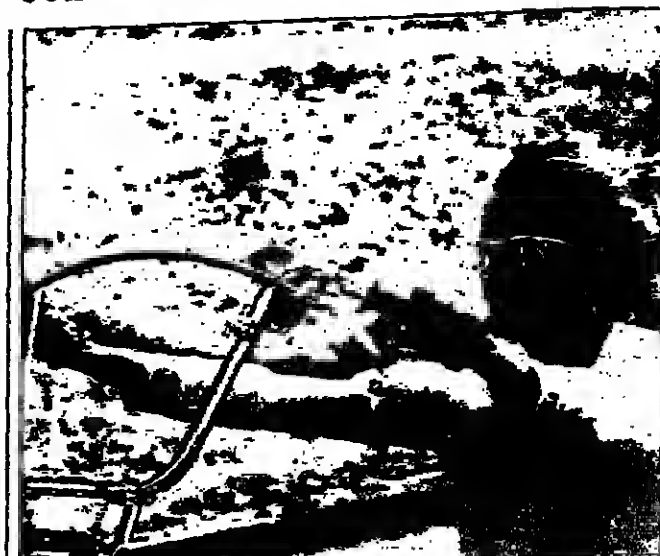
House price range	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
448 (over £250)	28%	28%	28%	28%	28%
302 (£150-£200)	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%
192 (£200-£250)	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%



Pensions Board bikers in power struggle

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK



Powerful stuff: Easy Rider-style rivalry on the OPB

Try as I might I cannot imagine that sitting on the Occupational Pensions Board (OPB), though worthy, can provide much excitement. In the middle of advising the Government on pensions issues, two members of the OPB have formed an unlikely rivalry.

On the one hand there is Robin "Chopper" Ellison, a partner of law firm Hammond Suddards, who commutes to the City from Hamstead on his powerful motorbike, a maroon Honda ST 1100 Pan European. Coming in fast come from Cambridge is Martin "Ion Up" Slack of consulting actuaries Lane Clark & Peacock, who sports a BMW K1100 SE.

Mr Slack lets himself down slightly in the "Easy Rider" stakes, however - his bike is an actuarial grey.

The air is thick with mortar boards and flapping gowns as industry heads return to their business schools to collect a shower of honorary gongs. First off the mark today is Terry Leahy, the man set to succeed Sir Ian MacLaurin at the helm of Tesco next year.

Mr Leahy returns to UMIST's Manchester School of Management to receive the first Annus of the Year Award. Tomorrow it's the London Business School's turn, as 400 masters' graduates pick up their scrolls alongside Honorary Fellows Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman and chief executive of Marks & Spencer and Sir Colin Marshall, chairman of British Airways.

Michael Heseltine, President of the Board of Trade, has the perfect opportunity tonight to start rebuilding Anglo-German relations after the fearful battering they got from the tabloids during Euro 96. He will deliver a speech and a toast at the German-British Chamber of Industry & Commerce in Whitehall, following a concert by the London Handel Orchestra and before a Gala Dinner. There will also be a speech by Jürgen Schrampp, chairman of Daimler-Benz, and a vote of thanks by the Chamber's chairman, Jürgen Gehrels. Jürgen Klusmann will not be attending.

One of the LBS's Honorary Fellows from last year, Tim Parker of C&J Clark, will not be attending. Presumably he is too busy overseeing the redundancies of 1,400 employees.

Another of last year's recipients, Martin Sorrell of WPP, is also unable to attend despite being a Governor of the LBS. Mr Sorrell has missed his chance to discuss his massive incentive scheme with Sir Richard Greenbury.

A key to the executive loas has traditionally been proof that you've made it. Bravo, then, to Ray Milne, newly appointed director of corporate pensions at Guardian Financial Services, the life and pensions arm of GRE.

The baby-faced Mr Milne, at 36 Britain's youngest qualified actuary, found a magnifi-

cent suite of antique loas on the executive floor of his new offices in St Andrew's Square, Edinburgh. One loo had a plate on the front marked "Superintendent" while the other was marked "Management".

Mr Milne soon learned that minions were barred from these conveniences, and that any female visitors had to wait while a male colleague nipped in to one of the loos to make sure the coast was clear. Exasperated by such customs, Mr Milne demanded that the plates be removed and the loos opened to all.

Now no one gets caught short on the first floor.

Richard Lambert, editor of the FT, spoke at the British Chambers of Commerce Conference in Birmingham yesterday. Strangely, there were no FT journalists in cover the event. No doubt Mr Lambert will be reporting himself on his own fine speech. No such doubts with another lecturer, Will Hutton, the Observer's editor, whose subject was "What economic policy for British business?" An Observer reporter was standing by to cover the great event.

Gas warns profits could halve

MAGNUS GRIMOND

British Gas yesterday launched a new offensive against Ofgas, warning that profits at its supply arm could effectively halve as a result of the gas watchdog's proposed domestic pricing regime from next year. British Gas Trading, the supply arm, would see its operating profits drop from a normalised figure of nearly £200m to around £50m, Philip Rogerson, BG's deputy chairman said.

Although he refused to be drawn on the job implications, the cost savings required by Ofgas of around £75m in the first year look almost certain to have an impact on the business's 10,000 employees, given that labour charges are understood to represent around half total costs.

The broadside comes less than three weeks after the gas group unleashed one of the bit-

terest attacks ever seen against a regulator's pricing proposals, when it condemned the controls suggested by Ofgas director general Clare Spottiswoode over its TransCo pipeline business. That dispute still looks destined to end up with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Mr Rogerson said talks with the regulator were making "little progress".

But he signalled that the battle over the proposed Ofgas domestic tariff formula, which would top £5 a year from the average gas bill for 19 million households, would not be as heated.

"The pipeline proposals were very significantly more extreme than those and tantamount to re-writing the rules." The new supply regime for BG Trading is "unfathomable and interventionist", he said.

"It is very harsh in respect of the proposals on costs and the

profit margin it would be allowed to earn if it cut out costs to the level proposed by Ofgas." Even so: "We hope over the next few weeks we will end up with a structure which works rather than one which won't."

His sentiments were echoed by analysts. One said the regulator's proposals were a "sideshow to the main event, which is TransCo". The most important aspect was the clamp on profits at BG Trading, but that would have happened anyway in 1998 when the domestic market is opened up to competition. "To me it looks like they won't be going to the MMC on this."

British Gas reiterated yesterday that it supported Ofgas's decision to allow the full cost of gas and its transportation to be passed through to customers. Although the company accepted the three-year duration of the new domestic price formula, it complained that

Ofgas had made no commitment to lift regulation after the year 2000.

However, its main ire was directed at the price controls. It rejected the tightening of the price cap from 4 per cent below the rise in the retail price index (RPI-X) to RPI-5 and its abandonment as a control over total revenue in favour of its application to several different payment methods.

Ofgas's requirement that 15 per cent of costs should be cut between now and next April and subsequent 5 per cent reductions would require the company to slash £75m off last year's £500m bill, with a further £25m in each of the two subsequent years, Mr Rogerson said.

Ofgas will produce its official consultation paper at the end of the month, with a further 28-day consultation period before British Gas must either accept or reject the proposals.



Warning for Ofgas: Philip Rogerson, deputy chairman

Meconic ends year on a high

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Meconic, the world's biggest maker of opiates, yesterday rounded off a sparkling maiden year as a listed company with a £6m acquisition and a 40 per cent rise in profits. The Edinburgh-based group saw its shares, which were floated at 135p in June 1995, rise a further 16p to 251p after it announced the purchase of Phoenix Chemicals.

Jim Cook, finance director, said Phoenix represented a very important strategic step for Meconic's existing contract chemical manufacturing operations. The Warr-based company works with drug companies who have difficulties with the highly reactive processes required to produce the chemical intermediates which go into modern pharmaceuticals. Adding Phoenix's expertise to their own would allow Meconic to offer a broader range of contract manufacturing services to customers and open up the US market, from which the company is banned under United Nations rules restricting the transport and manufacture of opiates.

Meconic is paying an initial £6m in shares and cash for Phoenix, with deferred payments up to £12m depending on results up to the year 2000. Underlying profits at Phoenix were £700,000

on turnover of £3m last year. The news came as Meconic revealed pre-tax profits up from £4.18m to £5.83m in the year to 3 May, helped by a £439,000 cut in the interest bill.

Meconic's existing contract manufacturing business was the fastest growing part of the group in the year last year, doubling sales to £1.15m. Much of its work involves making products developed by biotechnology groups, such as Shire Pharmaceuticals' galanthamine treatment for Alzheimer's disease and an infant eczema product for the recently founded Phytopharm. Growth should be maintained by further contract wins in the current year.

Sales grew 28 per cent to £5.4m in specialty fine chemicals, despite a slowing in demand in the second half for alioin, a chemical intermediate used in an anti-arthritis drug. Meconic said it expected that to pick up again, but warned of a slowdown in the growth of Bitrex, a bittering agent now used by all the major supermarket groups as an additive to prevent the accidental consumption of household cleaners and the like.

Total sales of the division grew 9 per cent to £27.1m, within which opiates were 8 per cent up and other controlled drugs were ahead by 28 per cent

Cook may sell First Choice stake

TOM STEVENSON

Thomas Cook, the travel agent now owned by Westdeutsche Landesbank, is widely expected to unload its 11 per cent stake in tour operator First Choice following its acquisition yesterday of Sunworld, Britain's fifth-largest package holiday group.

The deal, in which Cook paid Spain's Grupo Viages Iberia an undisclosed sum, bolsters the agent's presence in the UK tour industry which is dominated by Canada's Thomson, and British rivals Airtours and First Choice.

Sunworld controls 5 per cent of the British short-haul package holiday market between the three largest players, which have almost 60 per cent between

them, and Cosmos/Avro with 6 per cent.

"We have always enjoyed an excellent relationship with the company and today's announcement is a natural extension of our existing association," Ulrich Zierke, the chief executive, said. Sunworld's brands include Summersun and Wintersun, Sunworld Sailing, Sunworld Beach Villas and the charter airline Airworld.

Thomas Cook said Sunworld would complement its travel agency operations, long-haul holidays and foreign-exchange business. It has installed Nigel Hards, its former director of UK retail operations, as managing director, replacing chief executive Peter Long who is leaving immediately.

The deal with Sunworld draws

a line under Thomas Cook's attempt to form an alliance with First Choice, in which it took a 21 per cent stake in 1993 as part of the tour operator's successful defence against a hostile bid from Airtours.

The partnership, designed to counter the vertically integrated operations of Thomson, which owns travel agent Lunn Poly, and Airtours, which owns Gning Places, never lived up to its potential and the relationship has been on the rocks for a while.

A spokeswoman for Thomas Cook refused to say whether the Sunworld deal would mean it would sell its First Choice stake but she did say that it would have no impact on the commercial relationship between the two companies.

"We will continue to sell

their products through our shops," she said.

The deal signals a significant shake-up in the UK holiday industry at a time when all the large players are reviewing their strategies in counter the cut-throat competition and overcapacity that blew a hole in profits last year.

Airtours has been expanding rapidly in North America and Scandinavia. Thomson, meanwhile, is denying rumours that it is planning to sell or float its UK Thomson Travel arm.

Separately yesterday, Inspirations, Britain's sixth-largest tour operator, said it was paying £1.75m to acquire Skiers World, a ski-tour group. The deal will be funded by a £12m rights issue of two convertible shares for every five ordinaries.

Argyll stages £208m share buy-back

Argyll stages £208m share buy-back

NIGEL COPE

Argyll, the Safeway supermarket group, undertook the first share buy-back in the supermarket sector yesterday when it acquired 60 million of its own shares. Priced at 346p per share, the total value of the transaction was £208m. The deal represents 5.25 per cent of the company's share capital.

Argyll bought the shares yesterday afternoon after it had

been granted shareholder approval at the company's annual meeting in the morning. Argyll's gearing will rise from the year-end level of 13 per cent to 30 per cent as a result. The company expects the buy-back to enhance earnings per share by about 1 per cent this year. It said the company's higher gearing would not constrain the Safeway's expansion plans.

In an update on current trading, Argyll chairman Sir Alistair

Grant said sales in the 13 weeks of its current year were 9.7 per cent ahead of the same period last year. Stripping out new store openings, like-for-like sales were 5.2 per cent ahead.

Gross margins, excluding petrol, are slightly down on the year. Sir Alistair said this was "as anticipated" though the trend was improving. The petrol price war continues to have an "adverse effect" on Safeway's petrol business which

is understood to be operating at break even levels.

Sir Alistair said the group was starting to benefit from the Safeway 2000 restructuring programme. "Free from the disruption which inevitably accompanied these changes we are confident of delivering a year of good profit growth," Sir Alistair said.

Argyll sought formal approval from shareholders to change the company name to Safeway.

finance
accountancy
legal

A 6 page section covering vital issues in accountancy, public sector finance and the legal profession with pages of appointment opportunities

See pages 17 - 22
section two

To book your advertisement call
The Finance & Legal Team on
0171 293 2310

Every Wednesday in the
THE INDEPENDENT
section two

0171 293 2310

market report/shares

TAKING STOCK

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3725.7 +0.1

FT-SE 250
4376.0 +5.6

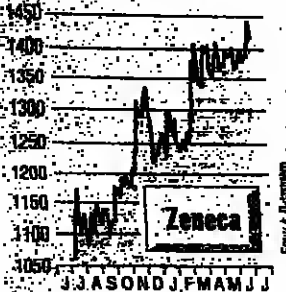
FT-SE 350
1878.8 +0.6

SEAQ VOLUME
749m shares,
29,638 bargains

Gilts Index
92.91 +0.10

SPOTLIGHT

Zanussi, prices



Yorkshire-Tyne Tees TV saga nears final episode

One of the stock market's longest running soap operas could be close to its final episode.

Shares of Yorkshire-Tyne Tees TV surged 75p to 1,258p, a peak. The warrants, entitling holders to one share at 200p, gained 72p to 1,030p. The excitement was generated by stories Granada, off 11p to 849p, would today mount its long expected take over strike.

Said one trader: "Every spin in the market is trying to find the shares; they expect a 1,400p a share offer."

Granada is seen as set to bid once the new Broadcasting Bill becomes law this month. But the giant leisure group could be excused for taking the view it is already free to move in on Yorkshire. In a little noticed move last week, Trade Secretary Ian Lang in effect cleared Granada's aggressive share buying spree in February which took its Yorkshire stake

above the legal limit to nearly 25 per cent with some of the shares parked in a "deadlock" company, Yorkshire shares were then 1,148p.

Granada left the rest of the broadcasting industry looking flat footed when it increased its Yorkshire stake. The regional television group has for long been regarded as a big prize for the TV barons. United News & Media no doubt nursed hopes of eventually capturing the company, building a 13.8 per cent interest.

It could be argued Granada has its work cut out absorbing Forte, the catering and hotel group it took over after a furious £3.9bn encounter, early this year.

But there are signs more hotel sales are near, lowering the group's sky high borrowings. And Granada has let it be known it is not at all disturbed by its already high gearing and it feels it could comfort-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

ably accommodate the £750m Yorkshire acquisition.

There were, as always, suggestions the speculators may have their wires crossed. Granada is thought to have rearranged much of its debt burden at more favourable terms and an announcement about the new financing is imminent. Such a move could have misled some of those so busily chasing Yorkshire shares.

The FT-SE 100 index barely stirred, moving just 0.1 point higher; the second line index fared a little better.

Trading was moderate with turnover inflated by special share deals. A 60 million buy-back by Argyle went smoothly;

so did a 41.5 million exercise involving Jarvis Hotels.

But Jarvis, which came the market only a fortnight ago, found itself the centre of controversy as Candover, the venture capitalist which backed the group in its early days, unloaded its 25 per cent shareholding through UBS and SBC Warburg.

Jarvis opened its market life at a premium of 15p to its 175p flotation price and there must be speculation whether the share sale would have been so well received if it had been known Candover intended to be such a quick fire seller.

It was suggested the market, meaning institutional in-

vestors, was aware of Candover's short term ambitions. Yet there is no doubt many of the small investors who applied for the shares were blissfully ignorant of the pending sale.

The placing was executed at 170p, prompting those who paid 175p to feel peeved.

Argyle, the Safeway supermarket chain, indulged in a share buyback through Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Panmure Gordon. The securities groups had no difficulty picking up the 60 million shares (5.25 per cent) at 346p.

The two placings accounted for more than 200 million of the day's share trading.

In a dull drugs sector, Zanussi shed 6p to 1,434p after reporting its new treatment for advanced breast cancer had been approved for use in Austria, Germany and Italy.

Vocalis, a speech recognition products group, made a strong debut; against a 95p placing

price the shares closed at 118p. Independent British Healthcare had a volatile start. The shares touched 95p, ending at 70p. Deals were undertaken at 69.5p and 67p. On Oxfam bridge Mineral Resources traded at 5.5p.

Warburg did a demolition job on George Wimpey. A profits downgrade the day after the building industry had been spurred by optimistic housing forecasts chopped the shares 12p to 147p.

Arjo Wiggins Appleton eased 2p to 176p on reports of a cautious analysts meeting and Boots investment presentation left the shares a shade firmer at 587p. James Capel lifted its forecast for HSBG from £4.1bn to £4.4bn; the shares rose 15p to 1,028p.

Meconic, the speciality chemical group, jumped 32p to 267p following a £6m acquisition of a corrosive chemicals business.

Tradeport, the small order-driven rival to the Stock Exchange, had its second busiest day since it started trading, turning over 7.5 million shares with deals in Granada catching the eye. Its best ever session occurred just after last year's launch. Tradeport's shares held at 140p; they have recently felt the weight of selling from Canada reflecting the likely delisting in Vancouver where the company achieved much of its early backing.

Servisair, operating ground support services to large airlines, should continue to push profits higher, believes stockbroker Wise Speke. It looks for £7.4m this year and £9m next. The company faces only limited competition, allowing margins to widen. The shares were little changed at 376p. They came to market at 135p in October 1994.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: 7 Ex rights 8 Ex dividend 9 Ex all 10 United Securities Market 11 Suspended 12 Partly Paid 13 Nil Paid Shares 14 All Stocks

The Independent Index

This index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from home. Simply dial 0891 123 333, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 123 333 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FT-SE 100 - Real-time 00 Starting Rates 04 Privatization Issues 36
UK Stock Market Report 01 Bullion Report 05 Water Shares 40
UK Company News 02 Wall St Report 20 Electricity Shares 45
Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Stocks 41

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333.

For assistance, call our helpline 079 437 437 (8.30am - 6.30pm).

Call cost 35p per minute (cheap rate), and 45p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Value	Stock	Volume	Value
Agri Group	220,000	£220,000	WPP	50,000	£50,000
Volvo	180,000	£180,000	HSBC (2p sh)	50,000	£50,000
UKA Group	200,000	£200,000	BT	50,000	£50,000
BT	150,000	£150,000	BT	50,000	£50,000
BT	150,000	£150,000	BT	50,000	£50,000

FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Time	Index	Change
Open 0945	3725.7	+0.1
11.00	3739.8	+8.3
12.00	3739.8	+8.3
13.00	3739.8	+8.3
Close 1600	3725.7	+0.1

14.00 3739.8 up 8.3
15.00 3739.8 up 8.3
16.00 3725.7 up 0.1

17.00 3725.7 up 0.1

18.00 3725.7 up 0.1

19.00 3725.7 up 0.1

20.00 3725.7 up 0.1

21.00 3725.7 up 0.1

22.00 3725.7 up 0.1

23.00 3725.7 up 0.1

24.00 3725.7 up 0.1

25.00 3725.7 up 0.1

26.00 3725.7 up 0.1

27.00 3725.7 up 0.1

28.00 3725.7 up 0.1

29.00 3725.7 up 0.1

30.00 3725.7 up 0.1

31.00 3725.7 up 0.1

32.00 3725.7 up 0.1

33.00 3725.7 up 0.1

34.00 3725.7 up 0.1

35.00 3725.7 up 0.1

36.00 3725.7 up 0.1

37.00 3725.7 up 0.1

38.00 3725.7 up 0.1

39.00 3725.7 up 0.1

40.00 3725.7 up 0.1

41.00 3725.7 up 0.1

42.00 3725.7 up 0.1

43.00 3725.7 up 0.1

44.00 3725.7 up 0.1

45.00 3725.7 up 0.1

46.00 3725.7 up 0.1

47.00 3725.7 up 0.1

48.00 3725.7 up 0.1

49.00 3725.7 up 0.1

50.00 3725.7 up 0.1

51.00 3725.7 up 0.1

52.00 3725.7 up 0.1

53.00 3725.7 up 0.1

54.00 3725.7 up 0.1

55.00 3725.7 up 0.1

56.00 3725.7 up 0.1

57.00 3725.7 up 0.1

58.00 3725.7 up 0.1

59.00 3725.7 up 0.1

60.00 3725.7 up 0.1

61.00 3725.7 up 0.1

62.00 3725.7 up 0.1

63.00 3725.7 up 0.1

64.00 3725.7 up 0.1

65.00 3725.7 up 0.1

66.00 3725.7 up 0.1

67.00 3725.7 up 0.1

68.00 3725.7 up 0.1

69.00 3725.7 up 0.1

70.00 3725.7 up 0.1

71.00 3725.7 up 0.1

72.00 3725.7 up 0.1

73.00 3725.7 up 0.1

74.00 3725.7 up 0.1

75.00 3725.7 up 0.1

76.00 3725.7 up 0.1

77.00 3725.7 up 0.1

78.00 3725.7 up 0.1

79.00 3725.7 up 0.1

80.00 3725.7 up 0.1

81.00 3725.7 up 0.1

82.00 3725.7 up 0.1

83.00 3725.7 up 0.1

84.00 3725.7 up 0.1

85.00 3725.7 up 0.1

86.00 3725.7 up 0.1

87.00 3725.7 up 0.1

88.00 3725.7 up 0.1

89.00 3725.7 up 0.1

90.00 3725.7 up 0.1

91.00 3725.7 up 0.1

92.00 3725.7 up 0.1

93.00 3725.7 up 0.1

94.00 3725.7 up 0.1

95.00 3725.7 up 0.1

96.00 3725.7 up 0.1

97.00 3725.7 up 0.1

98.00 3725.7 up 0.1

99.00 3725.7 up 0.1

100.00 3725.7 up 0.1

101.00 3725.7 up 0.1

102.00 3725.7 up 0.1

103.00 3725.7 up 0.1

104.00 3725.7 up 0.1

105.00 3725.7 up 0.1

106.00 3725.7 up 0.1

107.00 3725.7 up 0.1

108.00 3725.7 up 0.1

109.00 3725.7 up 0.1

110.00 3725.7 up 0.1

111.00 3725.7 up 0.1

112.00 3725.7 up 0.1

113.00 3725.7 up 0.1

114.00 3725.7 up 0.1

115.00 3725.7 up 0.1

116.00 3725.7 up 0.1

117.00 3725.7 up 0.1

118.00 3725.7 up 0.1

119.00 3725.7 up 0.1

120.00 3725.7 up 0.1

121.00 3725.7 up 0.1

122.00 3725.7 up 0.1

123.00 3725.7 up 0.1

124.00 3725.7 up 0.1

125.00 3725.7 up 0.1

126.00 3725.7 up 0.1

127.00 3725.7 up 0.1

128.00 3725.7 up 0.1

129.00 3725.7 up 0.1

130.00 3725.7 up 0.1

131.00 3725.7 up 0.1

132.00 3725.7 up 0.1

133.00 3725.7 up 0.1

134.00 3725.7 up 0.1

135.00 3725.7 up 0.1

136.00 3725.7 up 0.1

137.00 3725.7 up 0.1

138.00 3725.7 up 0.1

139.00 3725.7 up 0.1

140.00 3725.7 up 0.1

141.00 3725.7 up 0.1

142.00 3725.7 up 0.1

143.00 3725.7 up 0.1

144.00 3725.7 up 0.1

145.00 3725.7 up 0.1

146.00 3725.7 up 0.1

147.00 3725.7 up 0.1

148.00 3725.7 up 0.1

149.00 3725.7 up 0.1

150.00 3725.7 up 0.1

151.00 3725.7 up 0.1

152.00 3725.7 up 0.1

153.00 3725.7 up 0.1

154.00 3725.7 up 0.1

155.00 3725.7 up 0.1

news

Reaching the past other lagers can't reach

An Egyptian beer has gone on sale at Harrods, Paul Valeyly imbibes and reports

Two bottles, and you would not be fit to drive a chariot. Tutankhamun Ale, made to a 3,250-year-old Egyptian recipe, went on sale at Harrods yesterday. Mind you, if you could afford two bottles you would probably have had your chariot chauffeur-driven, with slaves to run alongside for good measure. The first bottle cost £5,000 and the other 999 in the numbered, limited-edition brew went for £50 apiece.

With some trepidation, therefore, I opened a bottle in the company of Jim Merrington, the brewer who has spent six years in a painstaking reconstruction of the antique beverage, first made in Amarna, in the desert wastes 200 miles south of the modern city of Cairo for the Pharaoh Akhenaten and his Queen Nefertiti. But before the glass could be raised there was a story to tell. It is a tale of some precision. Amarna was built by Akhenaten in honour of the sun god Aten, whom he decided was the only god. But when his son Tutankhamun succeeded to the throne he restored a plurality of deities and destroyed the city dedicated to this early monotheism. Amarna flourished for only 17 years, so everything there can be dated exactly. "It's a time warp. Everything you kick in



Sweet, fruity, with a touch of caramel, Paul Valeyly takes a drop of the old - 3,250 years old - stuff.

Photograph: Edward Sykes

the sand is 3,000 years old," said Mr Merrington.

He began work on the project in 1990 when Barry Kemp of Cambridge University, who is field director of the site for the Egypt Exploration Society, came across several streets of breweries including the royal

brewery. Dr Kemp decided that he needed a brewer. He contacted Jim Merrington of Scottish and Newcastle Breweries who, fortuitously, had recently visited Egypt after his son won a travel scholarship to study ancient graffiti.

"It was a wonderful opportunity to explore the origins of our industry," said Mr Merrington. "Brewing as we know it was developed in Egypt 4,000 years ago when the pyramids were being built they were said to have lived off bread and an alcoholic porridge ... by the time of Herodotus and Pliny the

Egyptians were exporting beer to India and Greece. "They had beers of different colours and strengths for different occasions: beers for high days, feast days, medicinal beers - ome for toothache, made with rhubarb, and one injected as an enema if you had piles."

Amarna's Sun Temple had a "window of appearance" - the equivalent of the Buckingham Palace balcony - from which the royals waved to the adoring multitude. Tomb paintings of the scene show that they were aided by long lines of servants, who streamed from the temple

carrying beer jars at their shoulders to distribute to the waving plebs. Working out exactly what was in those pots constituted quite a detective story. Thanks to the pharaonic practice of burying a king with everything he needed in the afterlife, archaeologists were able to refer to dolls' house-sized models of breweries at work. Dr Delwen Samuel, an archaeobotanist, painstakingly swept the floor of the breweries and found grains of emmer wheat, "very rare today, but the only wheat grown in ancient Egypt. Some of it was sprouted and used to make malt," she said yesterday, as she waited to taste the beer.

The tarry residues left in excavated pots were examined at the Edinburgh Brewing School using an electron microscope to work out the recipe. Jim Merrington visited the dig with four brewers, all of whom came up with hypotheses for the scientists to test. "They're mulling up there," said one, scrutinising a tomb painting. "It's drum malt; they still do it that way in parts of Europe." It was, said Dr Delwen Samuel, a model of interdisciplinary collaboration.

The team also analysed water from desert wells and built replica kilns to make beer pots. Ancient writings had talked of beer made from equal quantities of grain and dates. But when the archaeologists found no date stones and the scientists no date fibres, the Egyptologists concluded they had to reinterpret the hieroglyphic for "dates" - to mean "sweet substance" - starch converted to sugar in malt. What earlier, archaeologists had taken to be bread buns in pharaonic tombs are now thought to be cakes from which to make instant beer while an army is on the march.

There was nothing instant about the beer before us. When the brewers began work at S&N's test factory in Edinburgh, the emmer wheat was so hard that the brewery's barley mill had to be run at one tenth of normal speed. The beer could never be made in commercial quantities.

We lifted it to our noses. It smelt sweet and fruity, with a touch of caramel and raw grain. The label said 5 per cent alcohol and you could smell the strength. It tasted sweet, heavy, mouth-coating but with some astringency. Jim Merrington soon abandoned taster-speak and pronounced, "It's not a connoisseur brew, it's for quaffing." So I lifted the bottle to my lips and knocked it back, then had another bottle - it was cheaper, after all, than Dom Perignon - and left Harrods walking like an Egyptian.

RAF pilot 'in deadly game of chicken'

A jury watched video film yesterday showing the moment an army private was killed in an alleged game of "chicken" as he was buzzed by a low-flying RAF Hercules aircraft.

The film captured the Hercules XP186 in a low pass over South Cerney military airfield near Cirencester, Glos, in August 1994.

Private Christopher Game, 22, from Poole, Dorset, who was standing on his recovery truck roof, died from multiple injuries when struck by the rear ramp of the transport aircraft flying at 140mph, 12ft to 14ft from the ground.

The four minute video was the last of 21 shown in prosecution evidence in the Bristol Crown Court trial of the Hercules pilot, Squadron Leader Michael Morrison, 42.

He denies the manslaughter of Private Game, a single man.

The private's death on the afternoon of August 4 was captured on the film shot from inside the Hercules.

For some minutes, the aircraft circled woods and fields before coming in over the airfield.

The jury then saw only a blur of movement as the private's body fell from the roof of his truck cab and a piece of the aircraft's lowered rear ramp was seen tumbling to the ground.

Private Game's divorced mother, Rose, sat in court clutching the hand of a companion as the film was shown.

Junior Crown Counsel Mr Alun Jenkins, QC, slowed down the closing sequences in a jerky frame by frame movement.

Morrison watched the video intently from the dock.

The Crown said there was a practice among the Hercules crew, including Morrison, to make very low level passes after a completed drop operation.

They say these unauthorised passes had no operational value and were aimed at creating excitement and bravado among the air crew and people on the ground.

Mark Evans QC, for the Crown, said: "It was a game that could be described in some ways as playing chicken."

He maintained that the squadron leader had aimed the

aircraft with the intention of passing low and "buzzing" Private Game and others in the drop zone.

The jury were told the pilot and the private were part of a joint RAF/Army unit involved in testing air-drop equipment and techniques.

Both men were stationed at Brize Norton, Oxfordshire.

Private Game was the driver of a recovery truck fitted with a jib crane. The crane controls were on the roof of his cab.

Mr Evans said for some time previously a practice had developed where inspection runs were made after successful drops.

These runs were becoming lower and lower, the aim being to create excitement from the risk involved. The low passes were a "bit of fun", he said.

The Crown maintained the pilot was criminally negligent because of the risk involved.

"We say it is criminal because the defendant in those circumstances was clearly indifferent to the risk. He, of all people, knew what the risk was but nonetheless went ahead to have a bit of fun."

The prosecution said in some cases aircraft were between 14ft and 28ft from the ground.

On a second pass a number of the men dropped their trousers to expose their bottoms to the aircraft. Mr Evans said the squadron leader was a distinguished pilot with over 2,500 flying hours on Hercules aircraft.

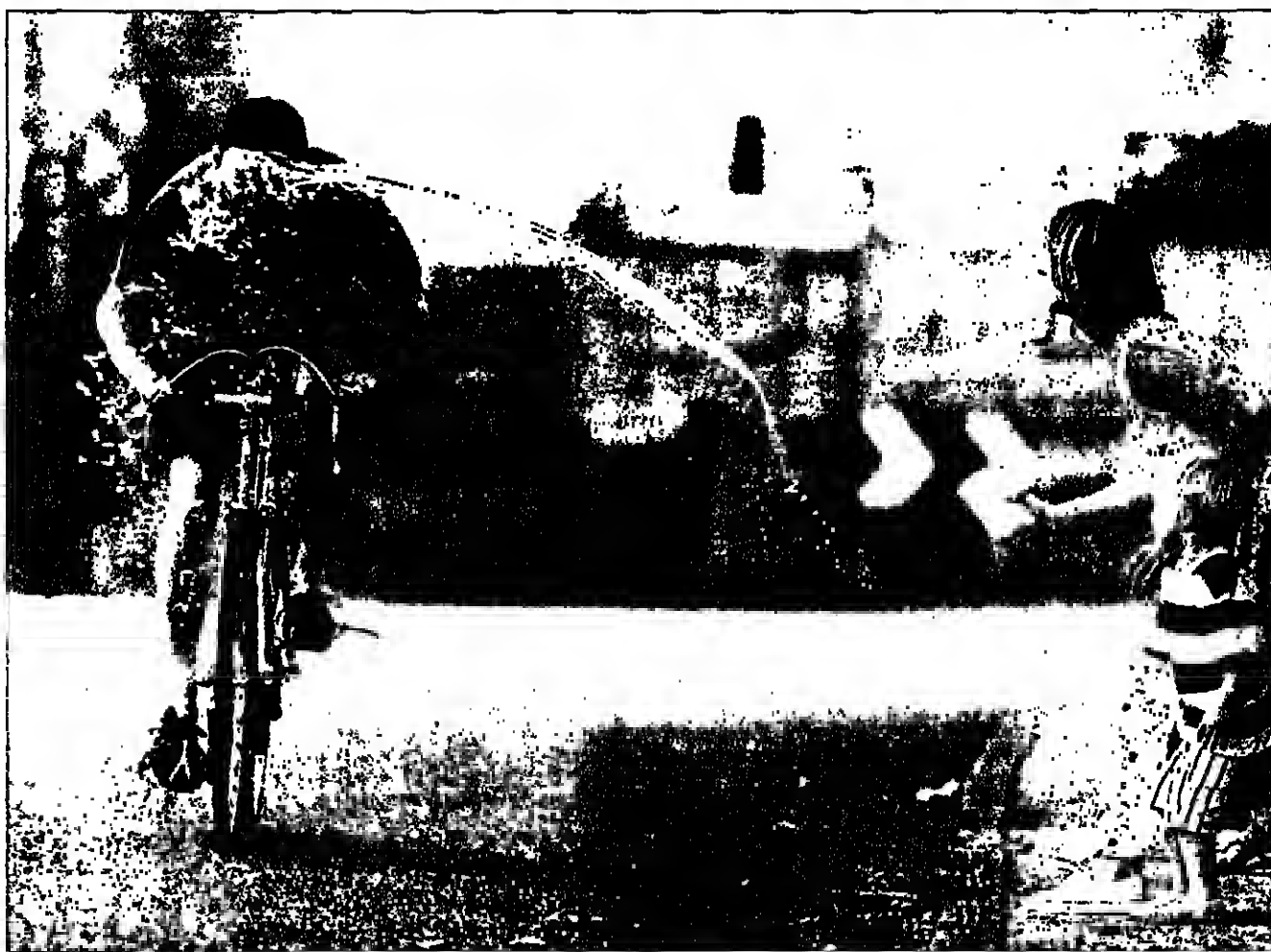
He had served for 20 years, mostly as an operational pilot, and also flew Tornados.

Mr Evans said the jury might bear evidence the pilot's radio altimeter had failed at 70ft in approaching South Cerney.

It was reported defective by the flight engineer and later proved to be operating outside normal tolerances.

But Mr Evans said the altimeter was not crucial to the low pass which depended on the pilot's visual approach.

He told the jury: "It does not explain why he was coming in that low. The prosecution say the question of the radio altimeter is effectively a red herring. It has no bearing on the reason for being so low."



Take a picture.

What does the Heart of Britain mean to you? Take a photo this week and it could live forever as one of 300 chosen by our celebrity judges to appear in the 'Heart of Britain' book.

There are nine categories, which might give you some ideas: Young Britain, Caring Britain, Animal Britain, Britain on the Move, Sporting Britain, Good Time Britain, Beautiful Britain, Working Britain and Tomorrow's Britain.

The picture judged best in each category wins an Olympus Mju-1 compact camera.

Send us your three best photographs, together with a



Heart of Britain

July 1st-7th

In support of Royal Brompton Hospital, the leading edge in heart research and treatment. Supported by: AMV Group • Bookman Projects • Dixons • Halifax Building Society • Hillsdown Holdings • Love This Records • Marks & Spencer

*£2.00 will last less than one minute and on charged at 30p per minute charge rate and 40p per minute at all other times. All profits are donated to The Heart of Britain Appeal. Lines close 10th July 1996.

THE CROSSWORD
HAS MOVED TODAY
to Sports tabloid, back page

هكذا من الاصل

summer of sport

Wednesday 3 July 1996

Graf faces Date with final destiny

JOHN ROBERTS
Tennis Correspondent

Steffi Graf and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario are one match away from a repeat of last year's astonishing final, but at least the women's singles has provided two new names in the last four.

Meredith McGrath, a Swiss-based American, has emerged unseeded from the bottom quarter of the draw to challenge the fourth-seeded Sanchez Vicario, and Kimiko Date, the No 12 seed, will face Graf, having become the first Japanese woman to reach a semi-final at the All England Club.

From McGrath's point of view, there is a distinct irony about the way events have transpired since the pre-Wimbledon tournament at Eastbourne. Having lost there to Monica Seles in straight sets in the second round, she has become the chief beneficiary of the second seed's early elimination.

In the fourth round, McGrath accounted for Katarina Studenikova, the Slovakian who upset Seles, and it came as no surprise yesterday when the American defeated her compatriot, the ninth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez, who injured her back while practising and did well to complete the match.

Fernandez, who was blown off the court by Seles's groundstrokes in the Eastbourne final, had no answer to McGrath's

YESTERDAY AT WIMBLEDON

- Martin gives Henman food for thought with threatening display of power and precision
- Easy does it as Sampras and Graf show the authority of champions
- Stich, the No 10 seed, comes a cropper in two-hour battle with Dutchman

grass-court play when lacking mobility yesterday, and was defeated, 6-3, 6-1.

The 25-year-old McGrath could scarcely believe what she had achieved. "I just stopped shaking about five minutes ago," she said. "It's an honour to be in the semis of Wimbledon. I'm just thrilled to be here and to be playing the kind of tennis I am. Coming into the tournament, I never expected it. I overcrossed my mind. I was hoping to win my first round."

McGrath, ranked No 27 in the world, always had the style to make an impression at Wimbledon, as she showed when defeating Martina Navratilova en route to the Eastbourne title two years ago and by winning at Birmingham less than three weeks ago.

The one alarming aspect of McGrath's match yesterday was a heavily strapped right thigh, which gave the im-

pression that she was more damaged than her opponent. "It's nothing major," she said.

She has lost her two previous matches against Sanchez Vicario, the first of them on grass in Newport, Rhode Island, six years ago.

The Spaniard defeated Austria's Judith Wiesner, 6-4, 6-0. After a slow start, in which she waited for mistakes which did not materialise, Sanchez Vicario found herself 2-4 down. She responded by showing more aggression and winning the remaining 10 games in a row.

Date, a quarter-finalist last year, recovered after losing the opening set against Mary Pierce to defeat the French No 13 seed, 3-6, 6-3, 6-1. "In the second set I got a little nervous," Pierce said, "and in the third set I felt like I had totally lost my rhythm." That is a fair summary.

The Japanese, in common with the ma-

jority of Graf's opponent's, has found her pre-match planning shot full of holes. Except on one occasion - the most recent of their seven encounters, in Tokyo in April.

Date clinched victory against Germany in the Fed Cup by defeating Graf 7-6, 3-6, 12-10. Only one other player has beaten Graf this year, and that was the 15-year-old Martina Hingis at the Italian Open in May.

Graf atoned for that by defeating Hingis here in the fourth round, 6-1, 6-4. The first set was over in 20 minutes. Last year it took Graf that long to complete one game of the final against Sanchez Vicario.

Yesterday Graf edged closer to her seventh title with an almost routine win against her old rival Jana Novotna, 6-3, 6-2 in 61 minutes. The Czech serve-volleyer rarely seemed likely to force a close contest, let alone find herself 4-1 ahead in the third set and serving, as she did before her nerve deserted her in the 1993 final.

Although Graf had to save three break points in the fifth game and double-faulted to lose her serve at 5-1, she quickly recovered.

There were times when shouts from the crowd distracted the players, but there was one amusing moment as the match drew to a close. "Come on, Jana, don't let the Germans win again!" came a cry when Graf was leading 5-1 in the second set. Too late. Unlike the England footballers, Novotna was not even close to a shoot-out.

Latest British member of the Last 8 Club aims for last four

The word "Tie" is clearly visible on cranes towering idly above the All England Club. It is not a message for Tim Henman, but the name of the construction company which is rebuilding the Wimbledon grounds.

Henman requires no urging. Nor does he need to be reminded to keep his feet on the ground. He leaves the hyperbole to pundits who have suddenly discovered positive words in the thesaurus which can be applied to a British tennis player.

The targets set before the 21-year-old from Oxford are clearly defined - Bunny Austin was the last British men's singles finalist, in 1938, and Fred Perry the last winner, in 1936.

Boris Becker's phrase about not thinking about the evening before the day is done comes to mind. It was used in the context of the extent of the former champion's wrist injury, but could be applied to Henman's situation today.

His immediate task is to overcome Todd Martin, the American No 13 seed, who looks like an animated version of one of the cranes. If Henman is successful, he will emulate Roger Taylor, the nation's last men's semi-finalist, in 1973.

Those who imagine that it is simply a case of come in No 13, your time is up, may be seriously underestimating Mar-

tin. The alternative (i.e. non-British) view is that the American's status as the only seed remaining in the bottom half of the draw is a marvellous opportunity for the 25-year-old from Illinois.

For one thing, Martin was the last player to beat Pete Sampras on grass, in the 1994 final of the Stella Artois at Queen's Club, London, 7-6, 7-6. He went on to reach the Wimbledon semi-finals with four five-set wins - the first player in the open era to accomplish the feat - before losing to Sampras in four sets.

"His game is very suited," Sampras says. "He's got one of the best returns in the game. He's a fit guy with a big serve. He moves pretty well on grass, and the thing that gives him the advantage is the way he returns. That's the shot you need to play well here. He obviously has proven that. He got to the semis here and is on the verge of breaking through it. I think he's got a good chance."

Not that the three-times champion doubts that Henman has improved since he defeated him in straight sets in the second round last year. "The way he's

playing, and with the crowd support, it will be an entertaining match," Sampras says. "The crowd is going to be into it. He's going to be playing with a lot of emotion. The way he's handling himself on the Centre Court has been phenomenal. But I think Tim is going to have to play a great match to beat Todd. I don't want to pick one guy. I think Todd might be the slight favourite, but the way Tim is playing, anything can happen out there."

Martin, who completed his fourth-round match against Sweden's Thomas Johansson yesterday, 3-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-2, has also noticed a change in Henman since he defeated him in straight sets at Queen's two years ago. "I don't know what else, but I know he's added a few pounds, which has really helped him out," he says.

"He seems to be playing very well and is very comfortable on the grass. The way I look at it is at least I'm on Centre Court. From there you've just got to play it like any other match, block out the crowd and realise that you're there to do a job and it doesn't matter whether people want you to do it well or not."

Henman took a break from his labours yesterday and prepared mentally for the biggest game of his career. He has shown already that he has the strokes and the temperament to take another major step forward.

His progress has made him the latest British member of the Last 8 Club, a hospitality facility on the grounds now incorporated in the new Court No 1 complex. Inaugurated in 1986 as part of the 100th championship celebrations, the Last 8 Club recognises the contribution made by players who have reached the quarter-final of the singles or the semi-finals of the doubles.

Henman will not look out of place among the greats who pop into the club, and he also adopts a refreshing attitude towards the Fred Perry syndrome which has inhibited many of his predecessors.

"When I've been growing up, coming through in junior tennis, it's almost been used as a negative against us," he said recently. "It's always been reported that we haven't had a Wimbledon champion since Fred Perry, emphasising how poor the standard of British tennis has been. But I think it's something I've tried to use as a positive to spur me on and try to achieve whatever I can in the game."

Raising a tennis star.
Main paper, page 12

FLASHBACK: MARTIN BEATS HENMAN AT QUEEN'S, 8 JUNE 1994

The only time that Tim Henman has faced Todd Martin was in a match at the Stella Artois Grass-Court Championships at Queen's Club in 1994.

Jeremy Bates was still the British No 1 and had just completed one of the best victories of his career, beating Boris Becker.

Greg Rusedski, then still a Canadian, but already talking of moving to London, was also on a roll, beating another British Wimbledon hero, Chris Bailey.

John Roberts, our Tennis Correspondent, ended one report from the Queen's Club championships with the following description of the Henman-Martin match:

Players born and bred here continue to show promise, the 19-year-old Tim Henman posing problems for Todd Martin, the world No 9, before the American won 6-4, 6-4, advancing to meet Rusedski for a place in the quarter-finals.

Henman, who had a break point in the first set, recovered from losing his serve in the opening game of the second set to level at 4-4, only to be let down by his forehand volley in the following game.

Martin, none the less, was impressed. "He is not going to need a wild card much longer. He has a ton of shots. He needs to play a lot of matches and get used to situations and also grow into his height. I was faced with the same thing when I was a year or two younger," he said.



Mary Pierce stretches but fails to reach the heights yesterday Photograph: David Ashdown

At only **12.9% APR**

it's easy to see what our lowest rate ever could do for you.

HAMILTON
Direct Bank

We have the money to help

Typical Examples:

UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS

FINDER	A LOAN OF £4,000			What you save with Hamilton Direct Bank	A LOAN OF £7,000			What you save with Hamilton Direct Bank
	APR*	48 monthly repayments	Total amount payable		APR*	48 monthly repayments	Total amount payable	
	14.9%	£109.38	£5,250.24		12.9%	£185.16	£8,887.68	
	19.9%	£118.10	£5,668.80		19.9%	£206.68	£9,920.64	
	17.9%	£114.68	£5,504.64		17.9%	£200.69	£9,633.12	
	17.7%	£114.32	£5,487.36		16.5%	£196.39	£9,426.72	

*The rates quoted are for new customers. Existing customers may be eligible for a different rate.

You can take out an unsecured Personal Loan for any reason with Hamilton Direct Bank, a division of HFC Bank plc and take advantage of our attractive fixed rates:

12.9% APR on unsecured Personal Loans from £5,000 - £10,000

14.9% APR on unsecured Personal Loans from £500 - £4,999

0800 30 3000

Quoting ref: 93004/185N

Wednesday pay £2.75m for Booth

Football
NICK DUXBURY

A flourish of transfers yesterday signalled the speeding up of the summer sales after the self-enforced lull during Euro '96. Andy Booth's £2.75m move to Sheffield Wednesday was the main trade of a day which also saw Manchester United confirm that they had put £3.6m on the table for Karel Poborsky.

The 22-year-old Booth, a former England Under-21 international striker, arrived at Wednesday from their Yorkshire neighbours, Huddersfield Town, whose manager, Brian Horton, immediately spent more than £2m of the incoming cash on the forwards Marcus Stewart and Andy Payton, plus the defender Andy Morrison. Horton paid a club record £1.2m to Bristol Rovers for Stewart, Blackpool's Morrison cost £500,000, and Payton £350,000 from Barnsley.

David Pleat's spending at Hillsborough could soon go through the £5m barrier, with the Charlton midfielder Lee Bowyer now back from holiday to give his decision on whether it is a Wednesday or a Leeds shirt he pulls on next season. Pleat underlined that he was pursuing a home-grown purchase policy. "We need to get good, young English players," he said. "We need that sense of responsibility rather than a mercenary or gypsy-type attitude where they want to leave when things are going wrong."

Manchester United operate no such restrictions and are willing to pay Slavia Prague big money for Poborsky, the Czech Republic's outstanding midfielder. Liverpool are no longer in the running for the long-haired 24-year-old, but Lazio are understood to have offered him lucrative personal terms.

After Italian and French arrivals, Chelsea are now trying to tempt Slovak Bratislava to part

with the Slovakian midfielder Robert Tomashek, 24, for £1.5m.

West Ham demonstrated a preference for a combination of domestic and overseas talent by signing the Southampton defender, Richard Hall, and the 30-year-old Portuguese striker Paulo Futre, a free transfer capture from Milan.

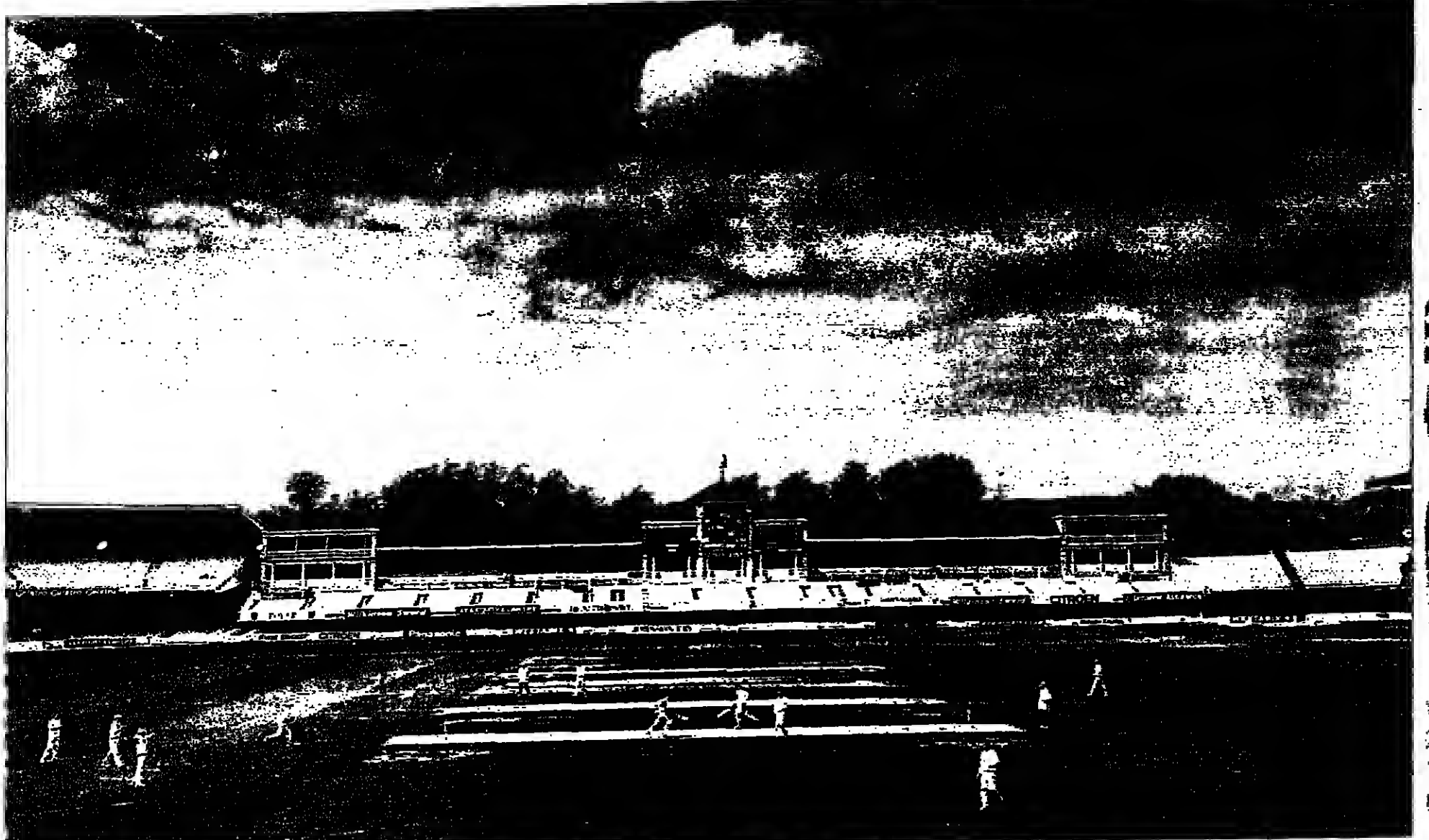
With another three arrivals expected later this week, their assistant manager Frank Lampard said that the Hammers were "going back to the era of Moore, Hurst and Peters" and described Hall as "our Tony Adams".

The fee for Hall, 24 and a former England Under-21 captain, will be decided by a tribunal, with the Saints asking £1.5m.

All is not sweetness and light at the cities of Leicester and Manchester. Leicester pulled out of a £1.6m move for Ben Thatcher after accusing the Millwall full-back of attempting to play them off in an auction with Wimbledon. "Leicester City are too big a club to be trifled with," said their manager, Martin O'Neill, who looks set to lose Ivan Roberts, the striker who contributed 20 goals to their promotion campaign. He has rejected a three-year deal and is now lined up for a £500,000 switch to Wolves.

The knocking of teeth at Maine Road concerns the 31-year-old Keith Curie, who has been put on the transfer list after being stripped of the captaincy. "After informing him that I was relieving him of the captaincy, it was agreed that we would circulate clubs informing them of his availability," Alan Ball, the Manchester City manager, said.

The media group Caspian, who have the former Queen's Park Rangers owner Richard Thompson on its board, has succeeded in a £20m takeover of Leeds United after beating off offers from leisure firm Comrad and a "late overseas bidder."



Oxford's batsmen make hay after being put in by Cambridge on the first day of the University match at Lord's yesterday

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Oxford's batsmen have Cake and eat it

There are new verities creeping into the University match. One of them is that the morning's play will be punctuated by the shrill cries of schoolchildren, as if quiet old Lord's was suddenly hosting a swimming gala.

Admitted free, the kids start drifting away before lunch, but yesterday, for the committed few who remained, the afternoon provided good value as they scampered around retrieving balls that had been hoisted into the Mound Stand.

The batsmen were a left-hander, Andrew Ridley, whose path to a delightful century featured one sublime patch as he raced through the sixties and seventies, and a militant right-hander, Gul Khan.

The mixture of right and left-hander severely taxed Cambridge, given the shortness of the Tavern boundary. The first-class regulations set the minimum distance at 50 yards, but this one cannot have been more than 45 yards, if that. So another verity of the modern Varsity match is that it will be played within a leg-side flick of the boundary, on a pitch that is drier, shaved closer and more batsman-friendly than any others prepared for first-class games at headquarters.

So what were Cambridge doing electing to field first in what has become the annual Batsmen's Game? Perhaps, hoping that if this pitch was to offer any hint of life it would

Norman Harris sees new truths revealed in this year's Varsity match at Lord's

only be found on the first morning. More likely, captain Russell Cake took the immensely pragmatic view that the best chance of victory for his strong batting side - arguably even stronger than Oxford's - was in being offered something stiff to chase on the last day.

The bowling difficulties faced by both sides are underlined by the fact that they contributed only one bowler between them - an off-spinner - to last week's British Universities side that played the Indians. Clearly, cerebral cricketers are batsmen: Derek Pringle is a very odd

man out as an Oxbridge seam bowler who played for England. Predictably, therefore, the Oxford openers started at something above the usual sedate pace of these first mornings. It was 46 off 11 overs before Andy Whittall's off-spin was introduced. Perhaps the most telling stroke - for all the fireworks that were to come later - came when Chinmay Gupte simply turned the off-spinner firmly from the back foot and defeated the man vainly sprinting along the line from square leg to midwicket.

A little hope for Cambridge came when Rob Tennent, at a very modest medium pace, swung it both ways, but errors of line and length were punished peremptorily. And the first wicket was to come, ironically since Cambridge's fielding was unaccountably slack, with a run out. Gupte thought he had defeated mid-on, but hadn't. He got most of the way to the other end, but not all that far back, as Cambridge made as much a meal of their part of the action as Gupte did of his. It was bad cricket.

Iain Sutcliffe gathered just six singles after lunch in 32 minutes, before flashing fatally at Whittall, and that left the stage to Ridley. Nothing became him, perhaps, like his start: an extra-cover drive for four from his second ball, and another such

stroke to go from five to nine. It suggested a rare talent, and he looked a young man apart with his dark blue cap, his relaxed, wristy strokes and a bat that gave the impression of being extremely light. His left-handedness apart, he brought to mind a youthful Australian of several decades ago, Ian Craig; he certainly did not look like anyone on the county scene.

Ridley had made a hundred in his first match of the season, and had now made one in his last game for Oxford. By the time he was out, caught and bowled for 155, he had hit seven sixes and 17 fours and Oxford were almost out of sight as they cruised to 390 for 4 at the close.

Happier all-rounder back at Trent Bridge

Chris Lewis admitted yesterday that he expects a "mixed reaction" from Nottinghamshire fans during the Trent Bridge Test against India.

The England coach, David Lloyd, appealed for Lewis to be "given a fair chance" at the club he walked out of last winter after four largely acrimonious years. The 28-year-old all-rounder's career has been rejuvenated by his move to Surrey and, during an England practice session, Lewis proved that he is untroubled by the hip com-

plaint which flared up during the Lord's Test.

Lewis said: "Life goes on and during this Test I shall be concentrating on my game. I'm sure I will be getting a mixed reaction from the people here. Relationships were strained. There was a clash of personalities with various people - it wasn't one individual. I think it's sufficient to say that I didn't fit into the scheme of things."

Matters came to a head when Lewis's mother's house was burned down and he returned

to London immediately to help out. Several people at the club suggested at the time that it was a made-up story and that Lewis was just trying to get out of playing some cricket.

"That episode sums up my time at Nottingham," Lewis said. "It was sad that I had teammates casting doubt on my word, but all that's in the past. I've been very happy with my form this summer. The whole atmosphere is more relaxed at Surrey."

Lewis is keen that England's management should consider him as a candidate for the No 6 all-rounder's role. Lloyd agreed that Lewis at six is one of several options for the Test. He said: "It's all about competition, isn't it? We have three players in our 13 who would all like to think they could do the No 6 job - Ronnie Irani, Mark Ealham and Chris Lewis."

"We will not be deciding our team until the morning and we've got one eye on the weather forecast. But, at the moment, all options are open."

Tyson offered £30m to meet Lewis

Boxing

Mike Tyson, the World Boxing Council heavyweight champion, was yesterday offered £30m to defend his title against Britain's Lennox Lewis.

Frank Maloney, Lewis's manager, wasted no time in pledging the money after Tyson said that he was willing to meet the Canadian-raised fighter. Tyson's WBC title, won against Frank Bruno in March, will not be at stake when he fights Bruce Seldon in Las Vegas on Saturday week - following a court ruling prohibiting him from defending his title against anyone other than Lewis.

As he then opted to meet Seldon, the World Boxing Association title-holder, Tyson was told to vacate his WBC crown on 15 July but, in a further complication to the heavyweight division

mercy-go-round, Maloney said Lewis was prepared to let Tyson keep his belt rather than fight for the two fighters to meet each other for a vacated title.

Lewis, who took £2.6m in "step-aside money" to let Tyson fight Seldon, was himself the WBC title holder until he lost to Oliver McCall in September 1994 and yesterday Tyson, who has lost just once in 45 fights, said he was prepared to face Lewis - the No 1 WBC contender.

"I hear he's saying everyone is afraid of him. Well, Mike Tyson is not afraid of him. I'm not afraid of anyone. Bring him on," the 29-year-old Tyson said. "I think he's afraid of himself."

This was just what Maloney wanted to hear, and in a faxed letter he told Tyson's promoter, Don King: "If Mike Tyson means what he says, then I can see no reason why this fight cannot take place."

Fast track to world records

Athletics

MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Linford Christie, committed now to a defence of his Olympic 100 metres title, takes to one of the fastest tracks in the world tonight at the Lausanne Grand Prix for a race that could create a new world record.

If conditions are favourable, Leroy Burrell's mark of 9.85sec, set at the same meeting two years ago, could go.

In a field that includes the US champion Dennis Mitchell and the two leading Canadians, Bruny Surin and world champion Donovan Bailey, the man most likely to threaten it is Frankie Fredericks, who ran 9.87 on a chilly night in Helsinki last week and is in formidable form.

Christie, his training partner, has yet to break 10.00 this season, but that is no cause for alarm as far as he is concerned. "I go into every race believing I can win," says Christie, who also runs the 200m

tonight. "If you don't have that confidence, you are in trouble."

The Lausanne meeting is one of Christie's main tests before the Games. He is due to compete at the Golden Four meeting in Oslo on Friday and completes his preparations in London on 12 July.

Butch Reynolds's world 400m record of 43.29 set in Zurich eight years ago could also come under threat. Michael Johnson has it in his sights after demolishing the 200m record and few would bet confidently against him.

Johnson, who won the world title last season with 43.39, said: "It could go. Right now there is not a lot of technical stuff for me to work on, so I'm looking forward to going out and running for fun."

"They gave me a couple of bottles of champagne after the 200, but I said I wouldn't open them until I broke the 400 record," Roger Black, who established a new British mark of 44.39 last month, is among

those trying to offer some sort of threat to the American.

Colin Jackson takes on world champion Allen Johnson, who came within 0.01sec of matching his world 110m hurdles record of 12.91 at the US trials.

And Sally Gunnell races two of the American challengers for her Olympic 400m hurdles title for the first time this season. Kim Batten succeeded Gunnell as world champion and world record holder a year ago. But it is the Gothenburg silver medalist, Tonya Buford, whom the British women's captain believes may prove the one she has to beat in Atlanta.

"I've always said that after coming second last year she will definitely be the one to watch this year because she will be hungry to win," Gunnell said.

Both women broke Gunnell's world record in a race that the Briton had to watch from the stands because of the heel injury from which she returned to hurdling less than two months ago.

THE INDEPENDENT
european championship
football forecast
THE FINAL SCORE

Euro '96 captivated and enthralled the nation and we hope that this Football Forecast competition added to the excitement of the tournament. We are pleased to announce that the winner of our football game is Mr Narda of Maida Vale, London.

The top five readers in our competition are as follows:

Position	Name	Town	Points
1	Mr Narda	London	63
2	G Prince	Kent	54
3	Mr Macleod	Spillit	54
4	DJ Dennington	Cherley	54
5	J Rhys	London	54

Below you will find the answers to the eleven questions

Question No.	Question	Points	Answer
1	Which striker from our list will score the most goals in Euro '96?	14	A. Shearer
2	Which striker from our list will score the least goals in Euro '96?	13	Z. Zidane G. Zola F. Roversell
3	Which goalkeeper from our list will concede the least goals in Euro '96?	11	V. Bole B. Lema A. Goram
4	Which goalkeeper from our list will concede the most goals in Euro '96?	10	B. Miroslav Van der Sar P. Schmeichel
5	How many goals will there be in Group C?	15	17
6	How many goals will there be in the England vs Switzerland game?	5	2
7	How many goals will there be in the Turkey vs Croatia game?	7	1
8	How many goals will there be in the Netherlands vs England game?	6	3
9	How many yellow cards will be issued in the quarter-finals?	9	24
10	How many substitutions will there be in the Wembley semi-final?	8	3
11	How many shots on target will there be in the Netherlands vs Scotland game?	12	22

Readers will have their awarded full points for correctly guessing only one of the three team players in questions 1, 2 & 3.

Supported by

ITV 3
BRITAIN'S MOST POPULAR BUTTON

THE VECTRA
FROM VAUXHALL
OFFICIAL SPONSOR
EURO 96

THE INDEPENDENT
CRICKET
FINES
International
Tour Line
0891 881 485
All Counties
News and Results
0891 525 075

Derbyshire	0891 525 370
Durham	0891 525 371
Essex	0891 525 372
Glamorgan	0891 525 373
Gloucestershire	0891 525 374
Hampshire	0891 525 375
Kent	0891 525 376
Leicestershire	0891 525 377
Lincolnshire	0891 525 378
Northants	0891 525 379
Nottinghamshire	0891 525 380
Northumberland	0891 525 381
Somerset	0891 525 382
Suffolk	0891 525 383
Sussex	0891 525 384
Warwickshire	0891 525 385
Worcestershire	0891 525 386
Yorkshire	0891 525 387

Mobiles cheap. English after 11pm. TAA, UK, London 01 922

Cold pizza, warm beer: the other side of Wimbledon

BEING THERE



As the roars and screams pitch over Centre Court, Carol Sarler tastes a satellite world where tennis comes second to a good day out

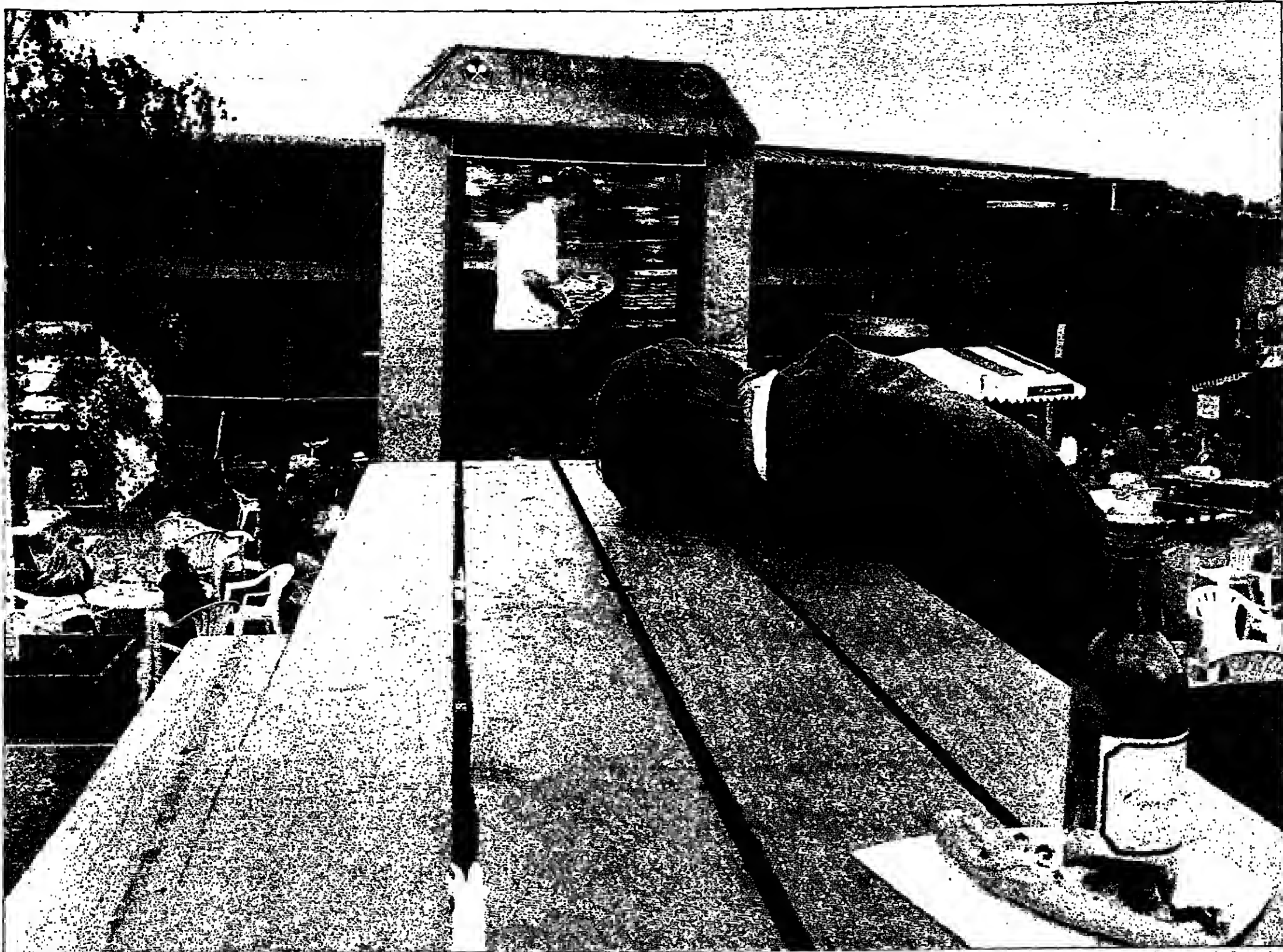
It had sounded, to be sure, like fun. After thirty-something years of watching Wimbledon on television, complete with the ritual of curtains closed to daylight and a sofa full of strawberries (to be eaten within the spirit of the thing, you understand), when the offer came to be there it was irresistible. Sadly, however, it turns out that there are two ways to "do" Wimbledon - which one may sum up as being, broadly, the right way and the wrong. And we got the wrong.

The right way goes something like this: you bowl up in your chauffeur-driven limousine; if you're enough of a dignitary, you even get a flashing-blue-light police escort. You head straight for a private marquee, doused in Pimm's and champagne, and from there to your reserved seats on Centre or Number One courts - where you spend a thrills-and-spills afternoon in the company of Pete Sampras and Steffi Graf... breaking, every now and again, for a top-up back at your marquee.

Such splendid sport, you are assured, is totally egalitarian; it is limited only to those who took the trouble to apply for tickets three months ago. (A cynic, however, might feel that exceptions are made: when David Seaman and Paul Ince arrived, on Saturday, how could they have known until three days earlier, that they would even be free? But enough of the sour grapes...)

The wrong way goes something like this: you haven't got tickets for either of the main courts, nor even reservations for the seating on Court Two - but, hey! You can go anywhere else! Like over 6,000 people each day, you can queue for ground passes that give access to 14 other courts and, so they coax you, you can soak up the atmosphere. Watch some great tennis. Have a marvellously British day out. Really? Really, no.

To be fair, first impressions are just that: impressions. Breaking the rule that everything you see on television - the stature of newsmen, the set of *EastEnders* - is smaller in real life, the Wimbledon complex is far, far bigger. Vast. You need a map and a sturdy line in footwear. It is also quite divinely genteel; if your last five sport-



There, but not there: Without a ticket for the show courts even the big screen relaying the main matches serves only to emphasise you are an outsider

Photograph: Peter Jay

ing event was - as was mine - Arsenal at home to Tottenham, and in the week of the infamous "Achtung" fever, this is another world.

Everything is Madam-this and Madam-that and do-let-me-show-you-the-way. Refugees from the WRVS staff canteen information kiosks placed all over. Noticeboards refer not to the men's singles, but to the gentlemen's singles. The English policemen really are wonderful, bright, kind and charming. And if you do step into a pool of strawberry-hued vomit, it's still a long way from Arsenal.

The trouble is, it's also a depressingly long way from the traditional image of Wimbledon. Of course the strawberries and cream are there, and of course the prices are all that is rumoured. (It was a chilly day, I came unprepared, so I was desecrated £30 for a revolting logo-ed acrylic sweater that will never, ever, be worn again.) But far more in evidence is the Styrofoam-clad portion of chips, the beer in paper cups, and the smell of cheap, stir-fried noodles vying with the ubiquitous pong of cold slices of pepperoni pizza. In the "food village"

boards of young people sprawl on the ground, pigging out like crazy. Whatever a tennis fan is, they look like something else.

For the real fan, there is scope for satisfying the groupie in your soul, which lies in hanging around the practice courts. There you stand within breathing distance of, for instance, Conchita Martinez as she serves,

stand just two feet from the umpire's chair and watch a pair of Germans, Probst and Singer, in women's - sorry, ladies' - doubles: they slap a high five on each other after each successful shot, the sound ringing out.

You can eavesdrop on the gossip, most of which - as with any event that covers more than one day - is designed to make you certain that you

note. On Court Seven, for instance, a large crowd has just dispersed following Jeremy Bates's defeat in the gentlemen's doubles, when a leggy coddle of a lass takes his place. A bare handful settle in to watch, for who has heard of Amanda Janes? They might have thought twice, however, if they had noticed Christine Truman join the handful - presumably on

favour, we number a couple of hundred while a few professional press Nikons are clicking like mad and doing nothing for the poor kid's points. After three consecutive double faults she blushes. It is hardly a sporting atmosphere; her little American opponent serves aces that meet with no applause at all, while after her eventual victory Amanda tells me, blushing with endearingly unconcealed excitement, "I've never had so many people clapping me in all my life".

But, in spite of such unexpected delights, the day feels unsatisfying. First, because it is hard to believe that much of the milling crowd is there for the tennis at all. The last seed in the bottom half of the gentlemen's draw, Wayne Ferreira (11) from South Africa, is playing his heart out on Court 13 - to lose, of course, in the end - against Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson. The third set ends, still with all to play for, and at least 50 spectators waddle off to meet the chums they had previously agreed to meet for another paper cup of beer.

Mostly, the day falls apart because of the feeling of being an outsider.

temporary compassionate leave from her commenting duties. For this was her daughter, making her Wimbledon debut.

It was not until Amanda was signed by Castro on the winners' podium last year and admitted to being quite overcome to be in the company of a man portrayed as the long-time enemy by Washington.

In spite of the US embargo, Cuba has not suffered unduly in the sporting arena. Its middle distance athletes and high jumper Javier Sotomayor are expected to shine in the Olympics and Ravenna suspects the government have only sponsored his race "as propaganda to remind the Americans how well Cuba will do in Atlanta".

But Castro could have chosen virtually any sport for Cuba's first role as host to international competition since the Pan American Games in Havana five years ago. The fact that Cuba's *baltaros* have become as much a symbol as the Vietnamese boat people makes the choice of a boat race, at best, a public relations own goal.

Things have obviously changed since last year, but I don't think there will be trouble. This is sport and not politics.

Scism and his countryman Felix Serrallles had their race uniforms signed by Castro on the winners' podium last year and admitted to being quite overcome to be in the company of a man portrayed as the long-time enemy by Washington.

In spite of the US embargo, Cuba has not suffered unduly in the sporting arena. Its middle distance athletes and high jumper Javier Sotomayor are expected to shine in the Olympics and Ravenna suspects the government have only sponsored his race "as propaganda to remind the Americans how well Cuba will do in Atlanta".

But Castro could have chosen virtually any sport for Cuba's first role as host to international competition since the Pan American Games in Havana five years ago. The fact that Cuba's *baltaros* have become as much a symbol as the Vietnamese boat people makes the choice of a boat race, at best, a public relations own goal.

The big stars do not mingle with our madding crowd. Guards allow a peek inside, but it's like pressing your nose against the window of a party to which you have not been invited

Powerboats churn up Cuba's troubled waters

Curiosity has overcome conscience in Havana. The spectacle of the world's fastest offshore powerboats, each costing £1.25 million and each capable of 150mph, churning up the oil slick and public sewage dump that is Havana harbour recently drew more than half a million Cubans to the crumbling Malecon esplanade.

The fact that the murky waters off the Cuban capital have claimed the lives of an estimated 9,000 Cuban *baltaros* or boat people fleeing to Florida makes the staging of a round of the Class One Offshore World Championship more than a little ironic, even crass, in the eyes of many Cubans.

"How is it possible to invite foreigners to have a boat race in the same place where hundreds of people lost their lives trying to get to Florida?" sighed Antonio, a *baltaro* who was snatched from the Straits of Florida by the US coastguard a quarter of the way to his dream land. "It is also the same place where the Cuban navy sunk a boat carrying more than 70 people, including children, to stop them reaching freedom."

From his spotlessly clean but dilapidated three-room apartment in a once magnificent 1920s colonial building a few blocks off the Malecon (part of the 1950s Havana Grand Prix track) Antonio could, if he wanted, clearly see the blur of the powerboats and their 20-foot plumes of mucky spray. He chose not to.

The elusive taste of freedom is still fresh in his mouth and Antonio finds it hard to look at any boat, especially one that could whisk him to nirvana so quickly. With the incessant rasp of thousands of horsepower echoing around his stark living room, the 32-year-old was visibly tortured.

"I can't watch, it is too hard. I know that with one of these boats I could be in Florida in less than an hour. If I went down to look at the race the urge to steal one would be too strong," he lamented, his voice drowned out by the roar of the Italian. This is the second year that Italian promoter Mauro Ravenna has brought his aquatic cousin of Formula One to Cuba. It is a case of sporting and political symbiosis for Ravenna and his new friend, Fidel Castro.

SPORT IN ANOTHER COUNTRY

Jeremy Hart finds sport and politics entwined on Havana's crumbling seafront

Powerboating needs the estimated £300,000 sponsorship money from the Cuban government as much as Cuba needs the good publicity the powerboats bring.

Ravenna, likened to Formula One's supreme Bernie Ecclestone, has lost 30 per cent of his entries to the recession since last year and with just nine races scheduled for 1996, the sport desperately needs new venues like Cuba.

Grand Prix La Isla Grande was the first round of this year's most glamorous

powerboat series, whose normally chic ports of call include Malaga, Monaco and Dubai. Crumpling Havana is the odd one out.

"The sea is very important for Cuba, and the race is good publicity and good prestige," said Ravenna, whose race is not open to Cuban drivers, banned from powerboats for fear they could outrun the Cuban navy to Miami. Instead, the Cubans took part in a jet-ski support race.

"The economy here has been affected, unfairly, by the embargo but now tourism is opening up. Cuba has received bad publicity for no reason. Castro has done a remarkable job even with the US embargo."

In spite of the recently exacerbated situation between Castro and Uncle Sam - made worse when Cuban MiG 29s shot down American pilots looking for *baltaros* - the Cubans are welcoming back all racers, including the three Americans in the Dubai-based Victory team.

"Cuba was a lot friendlier than expected," Randy Scism, from Michigan, said. "As an American, we get a pretty biased opinion of Cuba and before going we were very con-

cerned. Things have obviously changed since last year, but I don't think there will be trouble. This is sport and not politics."

Scism and his countryman Felix Serrallles had their race uniforms signed by Castro on the winners' podium last year and admitted to being quite overcome to be in the company of a man portrayed as the long-time enemy by Washington.

In spite of the US embargo, Cuba has not suffered unduly in the sporting arena. Its middle distance athletes and high jumper Javier Sotomayor are expected to shine in the Olympics and Ravenna suspects the government have only sponsored his race "as propaganda to remind the Americans how well Cuba will do in Atlanta".

But Castro could have chosen virtually any sport for Cuba's first role as host to international competition since the Pan American Games in Havana five years ago. The fact that Cuba's *baltaros* have become as much a symbol as the Vietnamese boat people makes the choice of a boat race, at best, a public relations own goal.

SPORTING VERNACULAR

No 4 VOLLEY

A powerful volley is an indispensable part of the armament of any good grass-court player, as Tim Henman demonstrated on Monday with a fine diving return.

It doesn't do any harm in winning over the crowd either, for whom the sudden, aggressive interruption of the familiar strike-and-bounce rhythm of a long rally offers an almost subliminal thrill, a sort of physical synecdoche.

And that aggression and attack should be associated with the volley is hardly surprising - the word has its origin in the Latin *volare*, to fly, and its earliest uses are related to the arts of war, rather than sport.

Oddly, it is artillery that gets the earliest citation in the Oxford English Dictionary, rather than archery, from which the term must have originally come. To let fly an arrow (a projectile, after all, which has "flights") would seem to be a far more natural construction than to let fly a cannonball, a weapon for which "fire" is the instinctive verb. In tennis the term is originally

used to describe the flight of the ball before it has hit the ground - a usage that is technically more important in Royal Tennis but survives in the modern game in the phrase "taken on the volley". Now, of course, the word has become transferred to the stroke that reverses the ball's flight through the air - when a commentator exclaims "Oh, lovely volley!" it is the action of the player that excites his admiration as much as the subsequent trajectory of the ball.

Similarly in football, a volley describes a ball struck in the air but also conveys information about the force and directness of the kick.

In sport the volley, for obvious reasons, is always singular - a distinction from military uses where it commonly suggests many rapid or simultaneous shots. But if Tim Henman proceeds much further at Wimbledon he will find that professional tennis accommodates a hint of that, too - returning to the press box to face a volley of questions.

Thomas Sutcliffe

4 sports letters

Hidden Personality
Just as well, then, if the spotlight doesn't suit him, that he wasn't taken on as a football player. He played in midfield for England Schools - it might have been him taking that penalty at Wembley.

'If judges in boxing and the Eurovision song contest can decide on winners there is no reason why they should not in football'



Gareth Southgate's miss led to England's semi-final defeat in Euro 96 but Independent readers were unanimously against the penalty shoot-out system Photograph: Allsport

From Mr T Knight
Sir: There is much despair at the way in which the actual 90 minutes of football is increasingly reduced to a warm-up for penalty shoot-outs. Unfortunately the dynamics of modern football at the highest level tend to produce low-scoring draws in knock-out competitions in general and in Euro 96 in particular. The prospect of extra time (with or without "golden goals") and/or replays merely reinforces the long-haul mentality and prolongs the agony. Thus some form of decider is required. However, the key point is that the decider must be settled before the 90 minutes starts, so that:

- 1) the decider would be reduced in status to a warm-up or prelude;
- 2) the 90 minutes of play would be restored in status to the main event;
- 3) throughout the 90 minutes, one side would know they were going to lose unless they managed to score during the 90 minutes and could plan on that basis;
- 4) the 90-minute whistle would be restored in status to the climax of the event.

The principle of starting a game knowing the "result" in the event of a draw is not new. For example, when Scotland started to play Switzerland, they knew a draw would not be good enough. The principle should be extended to knock-out games.

TIM KNIGHT
London SW17

EURO 96 POSTSCRIPT

England's elimination from the tournament by means of the penalty shoot-out has attracted a heated response from Independent readers. Here are a selection of your views

From Mr G Ravenscroft
Sir: After England's disappointing elimination from Euro 96 might it not be a better idea in future to stipulate a penalty shoot-out be concluded when one side has scored five penalties and is at least two goals clear of the opposition? While this would prolong the duration of any future "shoot-out" it would spread the onus of responsibility for any defeat to at least two players and ensure the winners demonstrate greater consistency rather than greater fortune.

GRAHAM RAVENSCROFT
Crowhurst
East Sussex

From Ms S Alger
Sir: I have sat through numerous defensively played - and thus tedious - Euro 96 matches which have still had to be decided by penalty kicks despite the "golden goal" rule. The idea does not appear to be working. One thing would save players and viewers at least half an hour of unnecessary and exhausting extra time: have a penalty shoot-out at the start of every match. If the ensuing match ends in a draw, the penalty results can then decide the winners. Matches should be much more interesting because at least one of the teams, the losers of the shoot-out, would have a real incentive to score.

SALLY ALGER
London SW19

match) and there is a further 10 minutes with again the first goal being decisive. After another 10 minutes, another two are withdrawn and so on.

ANDREW HILL
Windsor, Surrey

From Mrs S Creswick
Sir: I am not particularly a football follower, but, as has been shown in Euro 96, it does seem unfair that the result of a team game can be decided by a one-to-one confrontation. If I recall correctly, draws in hockey games were decided on the basis of the number of (short) corners awarded. Has this ever been considered for football?

SUSAN CRESWICK
Upper Cam
Gloucestershire

From Mr A Haggis
Sir: An exciting spectacle it may be, but penalty shoot-outs are surely too much of a lottery to be used to decide matches in a major international competition.

The logical solution is to take into account each team's results in earlier matches, using points from the group games and adding further points as a team progresses through the knock-out stages (three for a win in 90 minutes, two for a win in extra time and one for a win on the basis of previous points). If, after 90 minutes plus extra time, the teams are inseparable, the team with the higher number of points from the earlier games would go through.

Everyone would know before the start of the match which team would progress in the event of a draw after 120 minutes. This in itself creates the excitement. There are those who would argue this would encourage the team set to benefit from a draw to play negatively. This might happen, but to sit back and defend for 120 minutes against a team that knows it has to score would be very risky. And in any case, to play for a draw in a quarter- or semi-final would mean settling for only one extra point which might count as a deadlock in their next game.

The beauty of this method is that both teams know exactly what they have to do. The team which has achieved the lesser results in the competition knows it has to score a clear-cut win to progress, otherwise it will lose out to the team which has achieved the better results up to then. How can anyone argue this is not fair? The team that gets results consistently in the whole three weeks of the competition are far more likely to be the ultimate winners under this system. There is no lottery to get in the way.

ALISTAIR HAGGIS
London W14

From Mr R Miller
Sir: At the risk of stating the obvious, I think all that is needed is to make it easier to score normal goals. This could be easily done by increasing the height of the crossbar by, say, three inches, or however much it takes to bring enough goals to make it extremely unlikely a shoot-out would ever be needed.

RICHARD MILLER
Sheffield

From Professor D R Harvey
Sir: Deciding the winners in knock-out competitions still seems worth further experiment. What about an alternative as follows:

In the first period of extra time, withdraw goalkeepers. Each team plays with 10 men and make the goals 10 per cent bigger (easily achieved with telescopic crossbars and posts mounted on tracks). If there is still a draw at the end of the first period, withdraw two more players per side. If there is still a draw at the end of the second period, there'd be an appeal to a jury of three to five people. This jury would be agreed by the managers of the teams prior to the game, from a panel established by the governing body of the competition and ratified by all the participating teams.

The jury might take "objective" facts such as shots on goal, corners won and fouls conceded as a base for their judgments, but should adjudicate on the basis of the quality of football played by the two sides. This scheme provides much stronger incentives to play more positive football and has a better blend of excitement with equity than a penalty shoot-out.

DAVID HARVEY
University of
Newcastle upon Tyne

Letters should be marked "For publication" and contain day-time and evening phone numbers. They should be sent to the Sports Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL. They may be shortened for reasons of space.

Fixed Rate
7.99%
8.3% APR
Fixed until 30 June 2002

Discounted Variable Rate
1.64% 1.6% APR
For 12 months

Up to
£5000
Cashback

Get three smashing mortgage deals this summer at NatWest.

Courting with the idea of changing from one baseline to another?

Transferring or moving your current mortgage?

Then set the electronic eye on NatWest.

Because as well as helping you with your mortgage, we also offer an ace Fixed Rate Mortgage of only 7.99%, 8.3% APR fixed until 30 June 2002, or a Discounted Variable Rate of 1.64%, 1.6% APR.

And if that's not enough to get you shouting 'you cannot be serious,' then how about a cashback of up to £5,000 instead?

So don't foot fault, call 0800 400 999 before the umpire calls 'time'.

NatWest
More than just a bank

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

Credit is only available to persons aged 18 or over and is subject to status and conditions. Mortgage loans are available from National Westminster Bank plc (NatWest) and its subsidiaries. Representative Examples: A couple (male and female), both non-smokers aged 25 are remortgaging for the £20,000 cashback offer. They are applying for an Endowment mortgage of £150,000 against a property valued at £180,000 over 25 years (300 months). Initial monthly payment of interest would be £87.75 gross, £84.75 net. Monthly endowment premium of £20.31 (this includes a £20.31 premium for Serious Illness Benefit). The total amount payable would be £412,365.54 gross, including £225 valuation fee, £103.30 estimated legal fees, at an interest rate of 6.99%, 7.2% APR (APR may vary). As the loan is for more than 75% of the purchase price or valuation of the property, an NML fee of £1,765 is payable. For 70%, 8.3% APR fixed rate and the 1.64%, 1.6% APR discounted rate, the couple are applying for an Endowment mortgage of £150,000 against a property valued at £170,000 over 25 years (300 months). Initial monthly payment of interest would be £134.22 gross, £130.22 net and for the discounted rate would be £56.33 gross, £52.18 net. For both offers, monthly endowment premium of £25.56 (this includes a £5 premium for Serious Illness Benefit). £17,750 estimated legal fees and £165 valuation fee. The total amount payable for the fixed rate would be £70,676.30 gross. Fees applicable to all examples: £200 mortgage fee, £65 sealing fee payable upon redemption, Valuation fee £145 mortgage set up fee. To qualify for the discounted offer, the mortgage application must be received at one branch of the National Westminster Bank plc in the UK on or before 31 July 1996 and drawn down no later than 30 November 1996. Fixed Rate offer is subject to £195 arrangement fee and £100 redemption fee from redemption payable upon application. We have calculated the fixed rate and the Discounted Variable Rate on the basis that interest will be charged at the same fixed rate or discounted interest rate for the full term of the mortgage. In fact, the fixed rate is only fixed until 30 June 2002. After this date the couple may decide to remain on the variable NatWest Mortgage Rate for the rest of the term or we may agree a new rate which it may be different to the fixed rate offer. At the end of the discounted period the rate will revert to the variable NatWest Mortgage Rate which is current at that time and the couple must remain on this rate for the specified period. Cashback Terms and Conditions: The 4% cashback offer (up to a maximum of £5,000) is only available on the 6.99%, 7.2% APR Variable NatWest Mortgage Rate. Percentage cashbacks will not be paid on amounts redeemed after completion. To qualify for the percentage cashback offer, the mortgage application must be received at one branch of National Westminster Bank plc in the UK on or before 31 July 1996. Furthermore, where Buildings and Contents Insurance are arranged through the NatWest Home Protection Scheme, an additional cashback of £50 is available. Not more than one cashback cheque is available per mortgage application. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other cashback offer. If the couple repay the whole or any part of the mortgage on or before 30 November 2001 regarding this cashback offer or before 30 June 2002 regarding the fixed rate offer or before 30 November 2002 for this discounted offer, they must repay the full cashback (discount) received in addition to any other charge payable on early redemption of the mortgage. The charge relating to the fixed rate offer will either be calculated on the basis of a charge equal to a monthly additional gross interest on the amount of the mortgage repaid, or a monthly additional gross interest on the amount outstanding on the mortgage when the couple change to a new mortgage arrangement. If the couple voluntarily redeem and complete a new mortgage on a fresh property with National Westminster Bank plc (NatWest) on the same fixed rate terms as the original mortgage of any time prior to the end of 30 June 2002, the charge will be retained unless the new mortgage is worth the same amount as the original mortgage. In this case the charge will be apportioned and the calculation will be based on the amount of the original mortgage redeemed. The discounted rate, the amount we pay back will depend on the value of the earlier, new mortgage. If the new mortgage is worth the same amount or more than their old one, we will pay back a corresponding percentage of the discount. The 20%, 8.2% APR and Cashback offers are not available on Home Equity Loans. Cashbacks are not available on Mortgage Plan or existing National Westminster Home Loans Limited customers who are not moving property within the period of the offer. The cashback cheque will be sent within 28 days of your NatWest mortgage being drawn down. These offers are not transferable. Mortgages available in England, Scotland and Wales only. The promoter is National Westminster Home Loans Limited at 41 Lombury, London EC2P 2BB. National Westminster Bank plc is a member of the NatWest Life and NatWest Unit Trust Marketing Group, and can advise on the life insurance, pensions and unit trust products only at that Marketing Group, and is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and FSA. Registered Number 920727 England. The "Best Overall Lender" and "Best High Street Bank" Awards were issued by "New Mortgage" magazine and were judged by an independent panel of 100 mortgage brokers. Details correct at time of going to print. Ref. No. 42799



GUY HODGSON

In the past the erstwhile Mr Gummy of the men's game

Krajicek, not seeded but ranked 16th in the tournament, felt that the key was his mind, a commodity that is not always rock solid. "Today I concentrated very well for the whole

For just a moment yesterday it appeared that Sampras might not make that appointment.

Shades of 1966 again when Roy Emerson halted his chance of a third successive men's singles title by crashing into the umpire's chair. Too injured to carry on properly, he could offer only token resistance against Owen Davidson and his chance

In these rarefied times, no men's match goes by without some reference to Tim Henman. MaliVai Washington reached to the quarter-finals for the first time in a Grand Slam yesterday but as far as Wim-

There was nothing vague about the world No 20's tennis yesterday, particularly his serve which he mixed wonderfully against one of the better returners in the men's game. "If you're coming down with heat at a good 120mph then you can maybe serve and volley a bit," he said. "I have to change the pace a little bit."

RICHARD EDMONDSON

One reason for Radulescu's

As a boy, Radulescu used to open his eyes in Bucharest (he now wakes up in Germany, where he has taken na-

He probably started serving quickly then to keep warm. "I'm trying to hit the ball when it's very high," he said. "It's easier to serve on grass because it's so fast, but I think it's also a gift from God."

The flag of the rainbow coalition had greeted Godwin at courtside, but, tellingly, it disappeared midway through the second set. By that stage Radulescu was keeping Fyffes in business during the changeovers, a diet that seemed to have

Before he brought his suitcase to SW19 Radulescu had never played in either a Grand Slam or a five-set match. Now he has become only the fourth player to win three consecutive five-setters at the championships and is one of four unseeded men in the bottom quarter, one of whom will make the semi-

finals. But will it be him? Radulescu himself is not touched by the coornity of what he might achieve as he remains in a haze of thankfulness. "Every match for me, after the first round, is a bonus," he said. "I almost lost in the first round."

It is not unknown on these lawns for a player with a moderate all-round game to be rescued by his service. The chap whose postman delivered to an address at Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, proved that. And Radulescu believes that now, 18 sets into Wimbledon, he has finally dislodged the rust from his game. Washington should start practising against lasers.

The man responsible for the development of British tennis players, Richard Lewis, believes Tim Henman's outstanding run at Wimbledon will inspire all young home players.

"Our current top players have a good number of years to look forward to and others, like Simon Dickson who is No 2 in the world at under-15 level, are coming through."

Lewis, British No 2 in the early 1980s, knows what pressures players are under, but says: "As long as the coaches and players keep things in perspective, British tennis can only advance."

Squaring the odds

[illegible][illegible]

15 – years since only one seed remained at this stage in the bottom half of the draw for the men's singles.

23 – years since a Briton reached the men's singles semi-finals.

101 – aces hit by German Alex Radulescu so far.

with some showers. Maximum temperature 19C

THE INDEPENDENT
WIMBLEDON
MATCHLINE

☎ **0891 555690**

- Latest scores and results
- Today's completed results



OFFICIAL INFORMATION SERVICE

VISITORLINE

☎ **0891 555691**

- Getting there
- Order of play
- Weather outlook
- Booking tickets for '97

FAXLINE

☎ **0891 662246**

Dial the above number from a handset linked to a fax machine and choose from the following options:

- Knockout chart
- Order of play
- Visitor info

Presented by Greenleaf Interactive Ltd, a Greenleaf Photo, London NW1 8AB.
Calls cost *1p* plus cheap, *1p* plus at other times.

6 playing the game

Your chance to follow Chang's lead

SO YOU WANT TO... BUY A TENNIS RACKET

By Tom Chesshyre

During the two weeks of Wimbledon, tennis clubs and public courts up and down the country are traditionally more packed than at any other time of the year.

The Wimbledon bug bites: tennis whites are fished out of the back of wardrobes and rackets retrieved from the dark corners of closets under the stairs.

Not surprisingly, it is the peak time of year for tennis racket sales. Some retailers sell as much as 70 per cent of their stock during the Wimbledon period. After enviously eyeing the Centre Court stars' flashy new equipment on TV, many viewers decide it is time to upgrade their old wooden, cat-gut, Fred Perry-era rackets for something a little more modern.

However, those tempted into buying a new racket this year have a bigger choice than ever and selecting the right one to suit your game has become something of a monumental, and increasingly expensive, task.

This summer has seen the mass-market introduction of a whole new range of "extra-long" rackets, which are an inch or two longer from the rim of the racket to the base of the handle than traditional ones. Most used to be 27in; the legal playing limit set by the International Tennis Federation is 32in.

The idea behind them is to give extra power - by naturally extending the length of the swing - as well as extra reach. These two factors are



Jan Pieters, an LTA-registered coach, tries out the Wilson ProStaff Classic at Paddington Sports Club, west London

Photograph: Adam Scott

particularly useful for shorter players when it comes to serving.

Michael Chang - probably the most notable pro to make up for his lack of height by using one of the new breed of rackets - has significantly

improved his service game: Prince has even named an extra-long racket after him.

There is also a large range of wide-rimmed rackets - nicknamed "power sticks" - on sale. These are the

most powerful rackets on the market and were first introduced roughly 10 years ago.

They have recently fallen out of favour with professionals as they do not have as much control as con-

ventional rackets, but they are considered suitable for club players lacking in natural strength.

As a guide to what is available this year, we asked Jan Pieters, an LTA-registered coach from Paddington

Sports Club in London, to test out a selection of nine rackets, from three different price ranges.

Rackets supplied by Lillywhites of Piccadilly Circus, 24-36 Regent Street, London SW1 4QR. Tel: 0171-915 4000.

Morgan aiming to build on Barcelona success

ATLANTA COUNTDOWN

No 3 ROBERT MORGAN

The sacrifices that Britain's No 1 diver has made in order to keep at the top level of his sport are both an indication of his dogged determination as well as a sign of just how much the Olympics means to many athletes.

Robert Morgan, 29, from Sheffield, trains five hours a day, six days a week. There is little time for anything else: he has no full-time job and relies on a modest Sports Council grant for his income. "I get by, but I don't exactly live in luxury," he said, without bitterness.

His dedication has paid off. At the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, Morgan was fifth in the platform event with a total score of 568.59 points, just 32 points away from bronze medal position.

He was also the 1990 Commonwealth champion in the platform event (he was silver medalist in 1994) and the 1990 European champion in the springboard event.

Diving has always been Morgan's all-consuming passion. He was just 17 when he competed in his first Olympics in Los Angeles in 1984 and has been to each subsequent Games.

However, his diving career has not been without its setbacks. Earlier this year he was having trouble with his eyesight: his contact lenses were reacting to chlorine in the pool, causing irritation and (inevitably in such a precision sport) affecting his performances.

To right this, Morgan received corrective eye treatment, which means that he no longer has to wear lenses. However, the time this took meant that he missed out on a substantial amount of training.

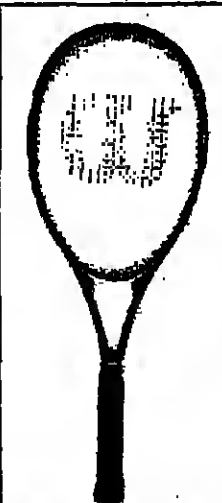
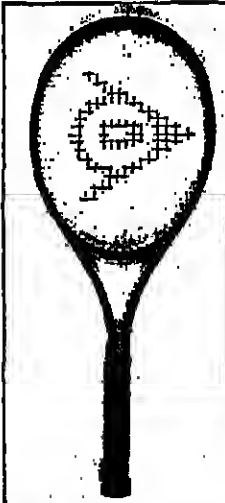

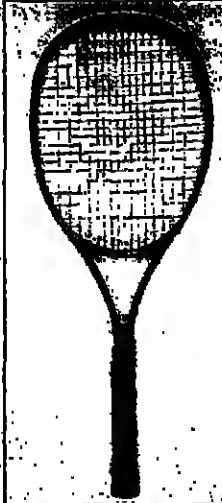
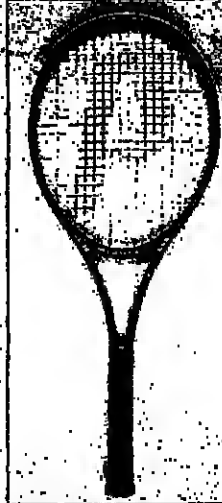
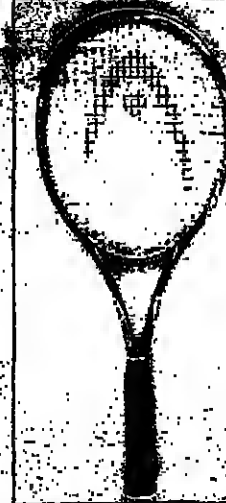
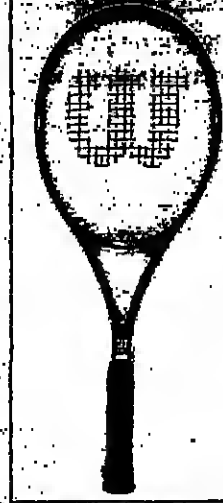
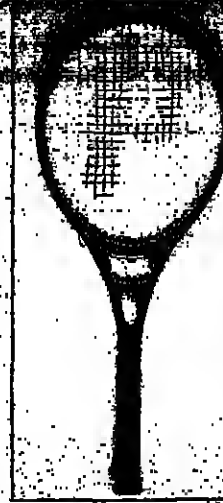
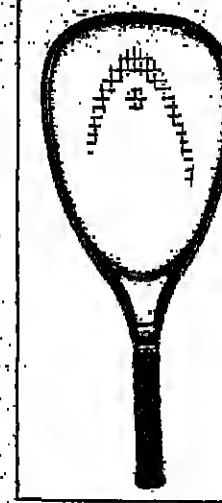
Britain does not have a particularly strong tradition in diving: our last and only medalists were Brian Phelps and Liz Ferris, who both won bronzes at the Rome Olympics in 1960.

Morgan, who is taking part in both the springboard and platform events, expects his main rivals in Atlanta to be Russia's Dmitri Savostine (who took him into second place in the 1993 European Championship), Michael Murphy (Australia) and Shuwei Sun (China), silver medalist at Barcelona.

How does he rate his chances in Atlanta? "If I can make it into the final 12, anything can happen," Morgan said. "I could produce something special on the day. My fifth position at Barcelona has given me belief in my abilities."

Although I've had a few injury problems since, I'm as good now as I've ever been and have improved substantially on the springboard recently. I'm not going to Atlanta just to make up the numbers, I have every intention of getting a medal."

JAN PIETERS' RACKET BY RACKET VERDICT

Club class: £100 to £150					County standard: £150 to £200			
								
<p>Wilson Sting Comp, £49.99 "A good value racket for beginners and intermediate club players. It's got lots of control, good balance and a nice feel when you strike the ball. Also there isn't much vibration. However, it's not very powerful and doesn't handle slice as well as it does topspin shots."</p>	<p>Dunlop Tour Revelation, £79.99 "It's got a small head and is very stiff, but doesn't have much power; you're not going to blow your opponent off the court with it. The racket really suits a wristy McEnroe-style touch player who likes to go to the net for volleys. Control is good and there's little vibration."</p>	<p>Wilson Sting Hammer, £99.99 "This racket is probably best for an intermediate club player. It's stiffer than the Wilson Sting Comp and has quite a bit more power. On contact, it has a balanced feel and you can get good control. However, it does suffer from quite a bit of vibration."</p>	<p>Dunlop Revelation Superlong +1.5, £119.99 "This is 1.5 inches longer than the average racket. I found it hard to get used to and hit quite a few frame-ions. You'd have to adapt your swing for it to work. It has extra reach at the net for volleys and the extra length provides a better serving angle."</p>	<p>Prince Precision Response, £139 "This has a good feel. You can stroke the ball very cleanly. The bubble built into the racket head takes out almost all the contact shock so there is hardly any vibration. It creates quite a lot of power and would suit a solid club player. A good all-round racket."</p>	<p>Head Radical Tour, £149.99 "Very powerful - this is the racket that Andre Agassi uses. You can really smash the ball which is good for club-level baseline players who need to generate that extra bit of strength. There's still good ball control. However, it's better for topspin shots than for slice."</p>	<p>Wilson ProStaff Classic, £179.99 "This is the best balanced racket of those tested. It's not mega-powerful, but powerful enough and control is excellent. There's hardly any vibration. It suits an advanced serve and volley player. Beginners may find the frame too stiff and the ball hard to control."</p>	<p>Prince Precision Michael Chang Longbody, £199.99 "Like the Dunlop Revelation Superlong, this racket is an extra 1.5 inches longer than average, so it feels odd at first. It's powerful, has a good balance with little vibration. It is aerodynamic which lets it swing through the air freely."</p>	<p>Head Genesis Dynamite, £199.99 "An extremely powerful racket, but that is about as far as it goes. It feels very light, but it looks a bit like a snow-shoe and is not very aerodynamic. Just a gimmick and really only suited to older people who need an extra bit of power. Not too bad for vibration."</p>

The final bell may be about to sound for the Dark Destroyer

The long hours spent pounding the winding road that leads to the summit of Tenerife's volcanic Mount Teide will have given Nigel Benn time to reflect as he prepares for Saturday's make-or-break meeting with Steve Collins in Manchester.

The roadwork at this training camp has become a metaphor for Benn's life as a fighter. As each yard passed beneath him when he sweated through daily five-mile runs, the former two-time world champion moved steadily towards the end of a war-torn career he seeks to prolong.

Benn claimed yesterday that were he to lose to Collins he would retire happy, having had a great career. But giving up is hard to do, as Benn realises. After all, he comes out of retirement to challenge Collins.

The hours of altitude training will count for nothing if, as many feel, nature has called time on Benn's life at the top of the most demanding sport of all. At 32, that point of no return must arrive soon, as it does for every athlete. But it is harder to accept for champion boxers, who lose large parts of their identity in defeat. Particularly Benn, who has bonded so deeply with his audience.

When a fearful Benn announced his retirement following his loss of the World Boxing Council super-middleweight title to Sugarboy Malinga in Newcastle four months ago, it was

Saturday's world title fight could be the last for Nigel Benn. Glyn Leach reports

largely through frustration at not having given his best for his supporters. They knew he would be back.

Unquestionably, Benn has been the fighter most in tune with his public over the last decade. He scorched his way to 22 consecutive knockout victories after turning pro in January 1987, and the nation welcomed a winner whose style and swagger reflected Britain's competitive aggression at that time. They responded to Benn and he responded to them in displays of violent symbiosis.

It was the early prototype of the Dark Destroyer that launched the British boxing boom from which Benn, Chris Eubank, Frank Bruno and Naseem Hamed have profited handsomely. The menacing, shaven-skulled Benn, complete with bare-chested entrances and prophecies of destruction, suggested a British boxer could be had, in the best possible way. Benn displayed power and ambition at a time when the national characteristic strove to abandon all pretension of Corinthian decency.

But the excesses of that era tempered Benn as well as the nation. The style outweighed the substance and the perpetrators were eventually found out. When Benn defended his Commonwealth middleweight championship against Michael Watson in May 1989 it was after spending the previous night having his hair braided. Benn found himself out-fought and out-maneuvred. Watson won in six.

Back to basics. Benn relocated briefly to the United States where, incredibly, he sparred for the first time in his career, and won his first world title, the WBO middleweight championship. His image as Britain's baddest man on the planet increased when he blasted the New York street tough Iran Barkley in one round. But Benn's recovery was based on false ground and his next defence saw Eubank stop him in the ninth round of a great battle at the NEC Birmingham in November 1990.

However, when Benn stopped the unbeaten Mauro Galvao in three rounds for the WBC super-middleweight title in October 1992 near Rome, he made history by becoming the only British fighter to win a world title twice on foreign soil. One year later he emerged as the moral victor from a drawn unification fight with the WBO champion, Eubank, at Old Trafford in front of 40,000 people, the biggest European

fight crowd of the last 30 years. Benn claims politics robbed him of the decision that night and many agree.

The defining moment of Benn's career came in February 1995 at the London Arena, when he halted the fearsome American, Gerald McClellan, in 10 rounds. The atmosphere bristled with nationalist emotion as the crowd willed Benn to a victory that, though tragic - McClellan is still struggling to overcome terrible injuries - must rank among the greatest performances by a British fighter.

With that win Benn cemented his place in the public's heart. It is a status that will go unchallenged when he meets Collins, the WBO champion. But while the Dubliner, the favourite, poses no threat to Benn's popularity, he puts his professional future in considerable jeopardy. A loss would be Benn's second in succession, and although it would be only his fourth defeat in 47 fights, the white-knuckle ride would be over.

This time Benn has been preparing behind closed doors. The owners of the Tenerife time-share complex where he has prepared in recent years have not been able to lure in tourists to watch the champ. Benn has realised that Sunday could be the first day of the rest of his life. And who would he be were he not the Dark Destroyer?

JUST THE TICKET: a weekly guide to what's on where

TENNIS: Today: Wimbledon Championships (until 7 July, All England Tennis Club, Southfields).
CRICKET: Today: Britannia Assurance Championship: Sussex v Hampshire (Worcester); Today's Challenge Series: Somerset v Devon (Taunton). Tomorrow: Yorkshire v South Africa A (three days) (Headingley). Tomorrow: Cornwall Insurance Third Test match: England v India (Trent Bridge).
BASEBALL: Today: Baltimore Orioles v Cleveland Indians (Cleveland).
BOWLS: Today: British Isles Outdoor Championships and International Series (Doncaster, Co. Ards).
SNOWBOARDING: Today: British Isles Snowboard Championships (Doncaster, Co. Ards).
SWIMMING: Today: 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 5000m, 10000m, 15000m, 20000m, 25000m, 30000m, 35000m, 40000m, 45000m, 50000m, 55000m, 60000m, 65000m, 70000m, 75000m, 80000m, 85000m, 90000m, 95000m, 100000m, 105000m, 110000m, 115000m, 120000m, 125000m, 130000m, 135000m, 140000m, 145000m, 150000m, 155000m, 160000m, 165000m, 170000m, 175000m, 180000m, 185000m, 190000m, 195000m, 200000m, 205000m, 210000m, 215000m, 220000m, 225000m, 230000m, 235000m, 240000m, 245000m, 250000m, 255000m, 260000m, 265000m, 270000m, 275000m, 280000m, 285000m, 290000m, 295000m, 300000m, 305000m, 310000m, 315000m, 320000m, 325000m, 330000m, 335000m, 340000m, 345000m, 350000m, 355000m, 360000m, 365000m, 370000m, 375000m, 380000m, 385000m, 390000m, 395000m, 400000m, 405000m, 410000m, 415000m, 420000m, 425000m, 430000m, 435000m, 440000m, 445000m, 450000m, 455000m, 460000m, 465000m, 470000m, 475000m, 480000m, 485000m, 490000m, 495000m, 500000m, 505000m, 510000m, 515000m, 520000m, 525000m, 530000m, 535000m, 540000m, 545000m, 550000m, 555000m, 560000m, 565000m, 570000m, 575000m, 580000m, 585000m, 590000m, 595000m, 600000m, 605000m, 610000m, 615000m, 620000m, 625000m, 630000m, 635000m, 640000m, 645000m, 650000m, 655000m, 660000m, 665000m, 670000m, 675000m, 680000m, 685000m, 690000m, 695000m, 700000m, 705000m, 710000m, 715000m, 720000m, 725000m, 730000m, 735000m, 740000m, 745000m, 750000m, 755000m, 760000m, 765000m, 770000m, 775000m, 780000m, 785000m, 790000m, 795000m, 800000m, 805000m, 810000m, 815000m, 820000m, 825000m, 830000m, 835000m, 840000m, 845000m, 850000m, 855000m, 860000m, 865000m, 870000m, 875000m, 880000m, 885000m, 890000m, 895000m, 900000m, 905000m, 910000m, 915000m, 920000m, 925000m, 930000m, 935000m, 940000m, 945000m, 950000m, 955000m, 960000m, 965000m, 970000m, 975000m, 980000m, 985000m, 990000m, 995000m, 1000000m, 1005000m, 1010000m, 1015000m, 1020000m, 1025000m, 1030000m, 1035000m, 1040000m, 1045000m, 1050000m, 1055000m, 1060000m, 1065000m, 1070000m, 1075000m, 1080000m, 1085000m, 1090000m, 1095000m, 1100000m, 1105000m, 1110000m, 1115000m, 1120000m, 1125000m, 1130000m, 1135000m, 1140000m, 1145000m, 1150000m, 1155000m, 1160000m, 1165000m, 1170000m, 1175000m, 1180000m, 1185000m, 1190000m, 1195000m, 1200000m, 1205000m, 1210000m, 1215000m, 1220000m, 1225000m, 1230000m, 1235000m, 1240000m, 1245000m, 1250000m, 1255000m, 1260000m, 1265000m, 1270000m, 1275000m, 1280000m, 1285000m, 1290000m, 1295000m, 1300000m, 1305000m, 1310000m, 1315000m, 1320000m, 1325000m, 1330000m, 1335000m, 1340000m, 1345000m, 1350000m, 1355000m, 1360000m, 1365000m, 1370000m, 1375000m, 1380000m, 1385000m, 1390000m, 1395000m, 1400000m, 1405000m, 1410000m, 1415000m, 1420000m, 1425000m, 1430000m, 1435000m, 1440000m, 1445000m, 1450000m, 1455000m, 1460000m, 1465000m, 1470000m, 1475000m, 1480000m, 1485000m, 1490000m, 1495000m, 1500000m, 1505000m, 1510000m, 1515000m, 1520000m, 1525000m, 1530000m, 1535000m, 1540000m, 1545000m, 1550000m, 1555000m, 1560000m, 1565000m, 1570000m, 1575000m, 1580000m, 1585000m, 1590000m, 1595000m, 1600000m, 1605000m, 1610000m, 1615000m, 1620000m, 1625000m, 1630000m, 1635000m, 1640000m, 1645000m, 1650000m, 1655000m, 1660000m, 1665000m, 1670000m, 1675000m, 1680000m, 1685000m, 1690000m, 1695000m, 1700000m, 1705000m, 1710000m, 1715000m, 1720000m, 1725000m, 1730000m, 1735000m, 1740000m, 1745000m, 1750000m, 1755000m, 1760000m, 1765000m, 1770000m, 1775000m, 1780000m, 1785000m, 1790000m, 1795000m, 1800000m, 1805000m, 1810000m, 1815000m, 1820000m, 1825000m, 1830000m, 1835000m, 1840000m, 1845000m, 1850000m, 1855000m, 1860000m, 1865000m, 1870000m, 1875000m, 1880000m, 1885000m, 1890000m, 1895000m, 1900000m, 1905000m, 1910000m, 1915000m, 1920000m, 1925000m, 1930000m, 1935000m, 1940000m, 1945000m, 1950000m, 1955000m, 1960000m, 1965000m, 1970000m, 1975000m, 1980000m, 1985000m, 1990000m, 1995000m, 2000000m, 2005000m, 2010000m, 2015000m, 2020000m, 2025000m, 2030000m, 2035000m, 2040000m, 2045000m, 2050000m, 2055000m, 2060000m, 2065000m, 2070000m, 2075000m, 2080000m, 2085000m, 2090000m, 2095000m, 2100000m, 2105000m, 2110000m, 2115000m, 2120000m, 2125000m, 2130000m, 2135000m, 2140000m, 2145000m, 2150000m, 2155000m, 2160000m, 2165000m, 2170000m, 2175000m, 2180000m, 2185000m, 2190000m, 2195000m, 2200000m, 2205000m, 2210000m, 2215000m, 2220000m, 2225000m, 2230000m, 2235000m, 2240000m, 2245000m, 2250000m, 2255000m, 2260000m, 2265000m, 2270000m, 2275000m, 2280000m, 2285000m, 2290000m, 2295000m, 2300000m, 2305000m, 2310000m, 2315000m, 2320000m, 2325000m, 2330000m, 2335000m, 2340000m, 2345000m, 2350000m, 2355000m, 2360000m, 2365000m, 2370000m, 2375000m, 2380000m, 2385000m, 2390000m, 2395000m, 2400000m, 2405000m, 2410000m, 2415000m, 2420000m, 2425000m, 2430000m, 2435000m, 2440000m, 2445000m, 2450000m, 2455000m, 2460000m, 2465000m, 2470000m, 2475000m, 2480000m, 2485000m, 2490000m, 2495000m, 2500000m, 2505000m, 2510000m, 2515000m, 2520000m, 2525000m, 2530000m, 2535000m, 2540000m, 2545000m, 2550000m, 2555000m, 2560000m, 2565000m, 2570000m, 2575000m, 2580000m, 2585000m, 2590000m, 2595000m, 2600000m, 2605000m, 2610000m, 2615000m, 2620000m, 2625000m, 2630000m, 2635000m, 2640000m, 2645000m, 2650000m, 2655000m, 2660000m, 2665000m, 2670000m, 2675000m, 2680000m, 2685000m, 2690000m, 2695000m, 2700000m, 2705000m, 2710000m, 2715000m, 2720000m, 2725000m, 2730000m, 2735000m, 2740000m, 2745000m, 2750000m, 2755000m, 2760000m, 2765000m, 2770000m, 2775000m, 2780000m, 2785000m, 2790000m, 2795000m, 2800000m, 2805000m, 2810000m, 2815000m, 2820000m, 2825000m, 2830000m, 2835000m, 2840000m, 2845000m, 2850000m, 2855000m, 2860000m, 2865000m, 2870000m, 2875000m, 2880000m, 2885000m, 2890000m, 2895000m, 2900000m, 2905000m, 2910000m, 2915000m, 2920000m, 2925000m, 2930000m, 2935000m, 2940000m, 2945000m, 2950000m, 2955000m, 2960000m, 2965000m, 2970000m, 2975000m, 2980000m, 2985000m, 2990000m, 2995000m, 3000000m, 3005000m, 3010000m, 3015000m, 3020000m, 3025000m, 3030000m, 3035000m, 3040000m, 3045000m, 3050000m, 3055000m, 3060000m, 3065000m, 3070000m, 3075000m, 3080000m, 3085000m, 3090000m, 3095000m, 3100000m, 3105000m, 3110000m, 3115000m, 3120000m, 3125000m, 3130000m, 3135000m, 3140000m, 3145000m, 3150000m, 3155000m, 3160000m, 3165000m, 3170000m, 3175000m, 3180000m, 3185000m, 3190000m, 3195000m, 3200000m, 3205000m, 3210000m, 3215000m, 3220000m, 3225000m, 3230000m, 3235000m, 3240000m, 3245000m, 3250000m, 3255000m, 3260000m, 3265000m, 3270000m, 3275000m, 3280000m, 3285000m, 3290000m, 3295000m, 3300000m, 3305000m, 3310000m, 3315000m, 3320000m, 3325000m, 3330000m, 3335000m, 3340000m, 3345000m, 3350000m, 3355000m, 3360000m, 3365000m, 3370000m, 3375000m, 3380000m, 3385000m, 3390000m, 3395000m, 3400000m, 3405000m, 3410000m, 3415000m, 3420000m, 3425000m, 3430000m, 3435000m, 3440000m, 3445000m, 3450000m, 3455000m, 3460000m, 3465000m, 3470000m, 3475000m, 3480000m, 3485000m, 3490000m, 3495000m, 3500000m, 3505000m, 3510000m, 3515000m, 3

Hidden Personality

In any case, he'd scarcely had time to be disappointed before his present employers took him on. They had been keeping tabs on him since the day he made 93 on his debut, at 15, for Farnham Cricket Club.

sport 7



When England lost on penalties in 1990, Arthur Smith helped to immortalise the moment in the hit West End play *An Evening With Gary Lineker*. England's action replay last week provided Smith with fresh inspiration

I met Rosie the night before England-Switzerland. I was in a bar talking to friends and then I wasn't talking to friends I was talking to her. I don't know where she appeared from - I didn't really care; she made me laugh and she was beautiful.

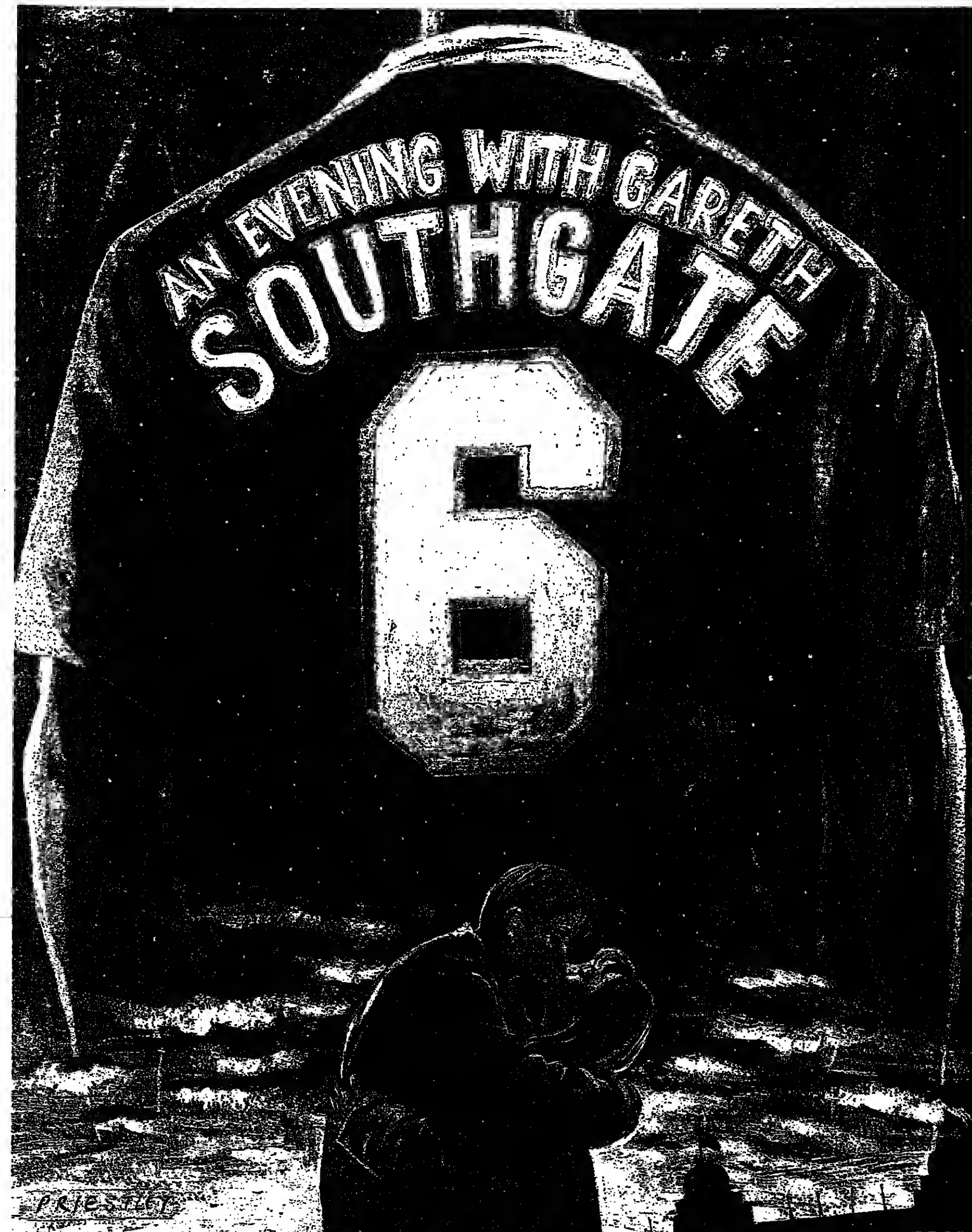
She told me Scotland stood no chance on the grounds that McAlister looked too much like Lennie Bennett; she told me too that one of the coaches was called Uhrin and we made a mutual wish that the tournament would be full of foreigners with funny names. I reminisced about the Argentinian player called "Ooh, I'll take a chair." She said she was an Arsenal supporter, so I pretended to hate her for that and started singing "Nay-im from the half-way line" while casting furtive glances at her hipster-exposed stomach. She had a chain and stud in her belly and a smile that would melt the heart of Kenny Dalglish. We discussed our respective rituals and agreed that we would both make a point of ignoring all the *It's A Knockout* poncing about before the game. During Mick Hucknall's drummy dirge she had decided to go upstairs and cut her toe-nails.

The next day it started. After all the build-up which in my case had lasted about two years, the games kicked off. Switzerland. The first half was fantastic and the second half a terrible disappointment. Like some lives I suppose. Rosie rang me afterwards and we cooed and drooled about Shearer's goal. We also agreed that if the lads can't get played on the plane on Gazza's birthday then the world's too dull a place. We were getting on really well. Isn't that nice when that happens? I wanted to meet up with her but she said she was flying to Spain that night. I was horrified, but she explained her room had a telly and she'd checked they were showing all the games.

It's not often you have your first kiss with someone at the entrance to the departure lounge at Gatwick Airport. More likely your last one. It was a proper sexual kiss full of sweet smells and soft tastes. Eyes shut. Her friend turned away and giggled.

The week shot by. There were games every day bar Wednesday, so that night I went out with my ex-girlfriend Kerry and returned the last of her clothes and had sex for the last time I should think. When I got home Thursday afternoon I found in among the post an envelope with two tickets for the Scotland game! Maybe it was some competition I'd entered but on the other hand it was mid-summer and that's when the fairies hang out. I was so excited I could hardly concentrate on Bulgaria-Romania.

After Switzerland-Holland, Rosie rang from Spain to say they were coming home early because she wanted to be in England for the Scotland game. O heaven! As I walked home from the pub, it was a warm evening and I felt good. I still had the redundancy money, the Kerry thing was



sorted, London was full of jolly Dutchmen and entertaining Scotsmen (I never saw a Swiss) and I was going to the big game with a woman I fancied the hipsters off. It could only be topped by an English victory followed by pulsating sex with Rosie.

And so it came to pass. If I had to name the best day I ever had this one would certainly be up there. It was a day of sun and roaring and jock-joshing and dancing and Gazza. Rosie's tummy diamond was unnaturally sexy against her tan. Later we had sex twice, once for each England goal. The third time we tried - well let's just say Rosie accepted it as a kind of tribute to Lennie Bennett's penalty.

The next four days were mainly football, sex and take-

away food. We could watch the first game in my bed and the second in my little garden, using my eccentric but effective TV screen-shading contraption. We sat in the subsidising heat and drank alcohol from whatever country

The next four days were mainly football, sex and takeaway food. We could watch the first game in my bed and the second in my little garden, using my eccentric but effective TV screen-shading contraption

was playing. Only Croatia and Switzerland presented a problem. We made the same sort of jokes everyone else in the country was making. Sometimes she would be sitting very still and quiet and then suddenly start singing beautiful songs I had never heard before. She had an

amazing capacity to look slightly different, and slightly more interesting every time I looked at her. After Holland, in my ecstasy I told her I loved her. She said nothing but gave me one of her Kenny Dalglish's.

Twelve days before, I hadn't known her, and Alan Shearer hadn't scored an international goal for nearly two years. Shit happens fast. By now everything was football. Who could get worked up about the Beef Wars when Suker was on the ball?

Actually, the Thursday and Friday before the quarter-finals I watched the Test match but my heart wasn't in it. Rosie wasn't there, she was away working, I presume. I never really knew what she did, not where she lived. She only

had a mobile and she didn't answer it on those two days. During the long hours leading up to the Saturday I did some brooding. How could she be so intimate so close for four days, 24 hours a day, and then just disappear for two days? Who was this woman who wore a diaphanous dress

one day and hot pants the next? I am not an inquisitive man, but I'd told Rosie I loved her, I at least ought to know what her surname was. I felt, as my dad used to say, cheesed off.

I resolved to act a bit mean with her when she came round for Spain, but she only arrived just before kick-off and, annoyingly, she had brought a bunch of flowers and a bottle of rioja - no doubt as a pre-emptive strike. I accepted them gracelessly, and we sat down to watch that tense game. By the time the penalties came round we were alternately holding hands and throwing them in the air. The Spanish who missed put their hands on their heads, and we were through - with the bonus of Psycho's magnificent ab-

solution. By the time Des was winding up we were making love.

Holland-France was the first game we missed. Afterwards we sat outside a wine bar and had an enjoyable, if incomprehensible, conversation with a Bulgarian.

The wine bar, normally a grim little dive, was alive with football chatter. Rosie won a spontaneous competition to mime Gazza's great Scotland goal. I came last on account of kicking a table over. In all the camaraderie I never got round to confronting Rosie and I never even bothered to ask where she had got the two tickets for the semi that she was suddenly brandishing. I had to accept that Rosie was amazing and unanswerable to me.

As we walked up Wembley Way on the late afternoon of 26 June 1996, I knew that I had become besotted with Rosie, a fearful and thrilling emotion comparable to playing Germany in the semis. She had arrived looking fabulous in a white dress with a discreet red cross above her heart. She had also astounded me by having replaced her short dark hair with a long blonde cut that was somehow not a wig. As Adams led the team on to the pitch we kissed in a way not really appropriate to a football match, even this one. Especially this one.

Throughout the game we cajoled, groaned, shouted, punched the air, stood with our hands glued to our foreheads, the usual repertoire of the supporter but performed with more intensity that I had ever experienced. When the whistle went at the end of the game and they all sat down in the middle of the pitch we too sat back, exhausted. Rosie's eyes were shining. I said: "I'm 29, I've got no job, I'm running out of money. I don't know what I want to do, but this has been the best 19 days of my life."

"I know," she said.

"Not the football, you."

"I know."

Rosie didn't shout during the penalties, so after the second, neither did I. I knew we were going to win and I knew that I would always be with Rosie. As Southgate stepped up she turned and said: "My thoughts will always be with you." The save. I was aghast. Then she said: "I love you, but I have to go now." And then Möller scored. In the massive silence, as the other German players sprinted in joy towards Möller, I turned back to Rosie and, of course, she was gone. Later that evening I worked out that she'd just ascended into the Wembley sky. It was that kind of night. It was that kind of affair. Rosie, England, summer, all gone in one moment. I felt broken and exhilarated.

Three hours later and with no idea how I got there, I found myself walking through a dark empty street illuminated at one end by the lights of a little pub, wonderfully open. There was only one customer, a young, hunched man. I recognise him. It was Gareth Southgate. I thought us both a pint and sat down with him.

"Gareth," I said, "tell me about it."

8

THE INDEPENDENT

F1
RACING

FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM



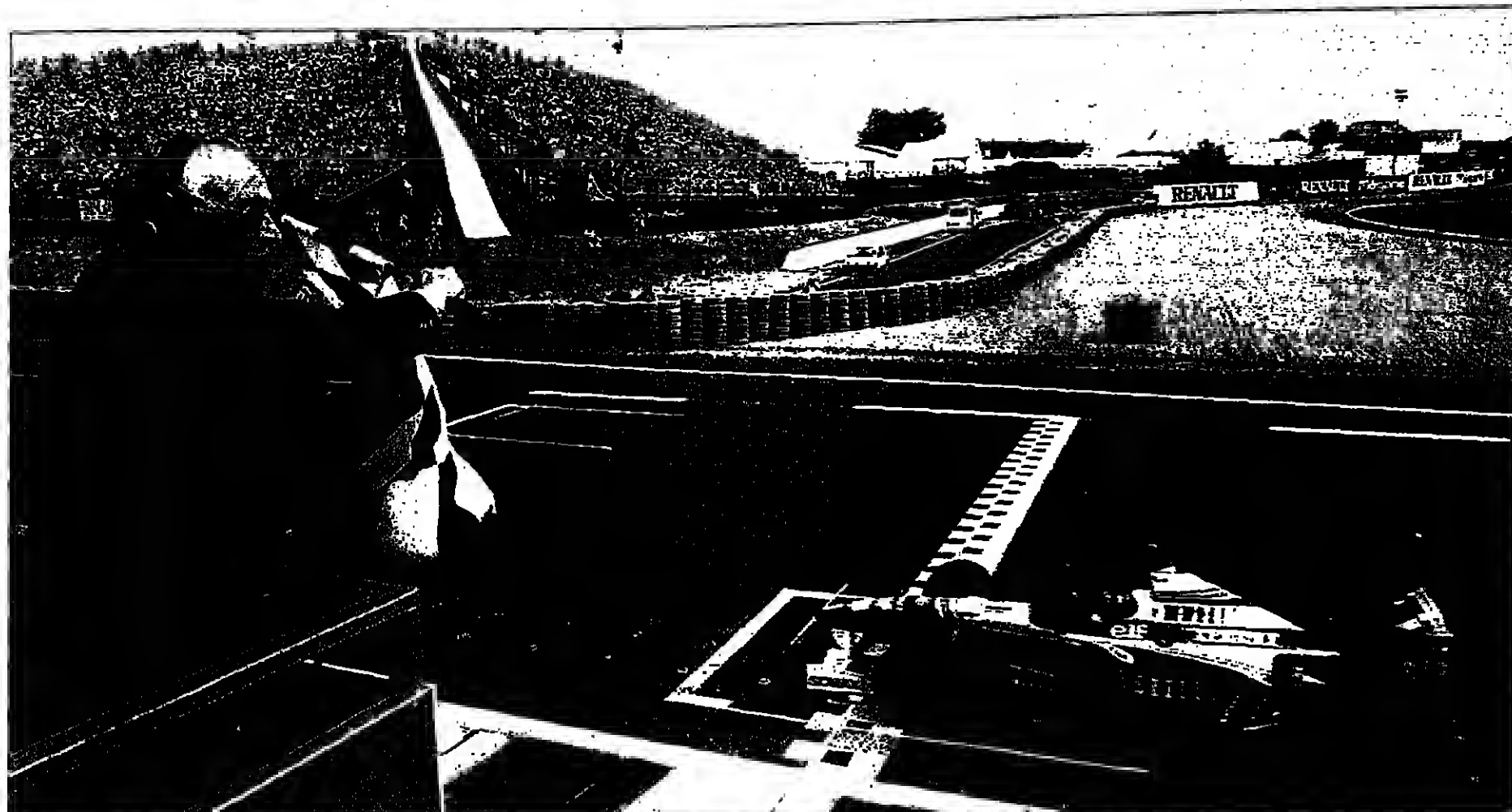
**GRAND PRIX
'96 RACE
SCHEDULE**

British GP
July 14
German GP
July 28
Hungarian GP
August 11
Belgian GP
August 25
Italian GP
September 8
Portuguese GP
September 22
Japanese GP
October 13

**Team
Position
Check Line:**
0891 891
806

**Results &
Top 50
Teams:**
0891 891
807

Calls cost 39p per
minute cheap rate,
49p per minute at all
other times.
Rules are as
previously published
and are available on
request.



Hill top: the Williams No. 1 wins the French Grand Prix at Magny-Cours

Photograph: Empics

The latest scores and results

It is traditional on this page to praise the achievements of Dream Team drivers. But Sunday's French Grand Prix produced a performance of total dominance in the engine department, and the engineers of Renault deserve the lion's share of the praise.

Renault engines powered the first four cars home, leaving their greatest rivals, Mercedes and Peugeot, gasping behind them. Truly, they are worth every penny of their £26 million dream team price, and they are a street ahead in the engine rankings.

The defeat will have been particularly galling for Peugeot on home soil. They have produced an engine that is generally reckoned to be every bit as powerful as the Renault, but Peugeot are yet to come within sniffing distance of a grand prix win, either with

McLaren last year, or more recently with Jordan.

And more ignominy was heaped on Ferrari, Schumacher's engine lurching itself to spectacular fashion half way round the parade lap. Engineering heads will shortly be rolling at Maranello if things don't improve soon.

On the driver front, Damon Hill was totally dominant after Schumacher's early demise. His teammate, Jacques Villeneuve, threatened only briefly to match Hill's pace, and after a poor performance in qualifying was simply outclassed all weekend.

Schumacher and his teammate Eddie Irvine found themselves down among the Forti and Minardi boys with minus scores thanks to their early retirements, but the bargain of the day was the out-standingly cheap Ricardo Rosset, who with eight points comfortably

DRIVER OF THE DAY: JACQUES VILLENEUVE

Jacques Villeneuve's selection as Driver of the Day is a fine example of how Dream Team scores reflect the story of an entire grand prix weekend, and not just the race.

His teammate Damon Hill outperformed him in the race (although Villeneuve led briefly during the pit stop sequence) but Villeneuve racked up the points in other ways.

He scored six points in the warm up, five for fastest lap of the race in his pursuit



of Hill, four points in the most-improved stakes (courtesy of a poor qualifying performance) and five for Driver of the Day. Add 16 points for second in the race, and you have comfortably the highest score of the French Grand Prix. Not bad for a No. 2 driver. Expect further lucrative drives as the young Canadian settles in to the grand prix scene. Who knows, he may yet challenge Hill for the title, for there are famously no team orders at Williams...

outscored his more expensive teammate Jos Verstappen, who spent most of the weekend playing in the Magny-Cours sandpits. Up at the top end of the field, the McLaren and Beontoo boys put in solid performances to reward their supporters without ever look-

ing like challenging the Williams twins. All the top teams will be testing at Silverstone today and tomorrow, searching for the elusive edge in performance for next week's British Grand Prix. But Damon Hill made his grand prix debut at Silverstone to an

uncompetitive Brabham in 1992, and he knows the Northamptonshire track as well as Jacques Villeneuve knows the back of Hill's car. Dream Team managers with Hill on board will be confident of a hefty points return on Sunday week.

Grand Prix Shopping List

POINTS SCORED

DRIVERS	Points	Points
£25m		
1 M Schumacher	2	119
£23m		
2 J Alesi	19	118
3 D Hill	21	215
£20m		
4 G Berger	14	66
£18m		
5 D Coulthard	12	83
6 E Irvine	2	46
7 J Villeneuve	26	162
£13m		
8 M Hakkinen	16	92
9 H H Frenzen	5	48
£10m		
10 M Brundle	0	38
11 R Barrichello	2	53
12 J Herbert	6	47
£6m		
13 M Salo	4	50
14 P Lamy	6	26
£4m		
15 P. Diniz	0	57
16 U Katayama	0	5
17 J Verstappen	-1	4
18 O Panis	2	76
£3m		
19 L Badoer	0	-6
20 R Rosset	2	13
21 A Montermini	-4	-7
£2m		
22 G Fisichella	-3	0
23 V Sospiri	0	0
24 T Marques	0	-5
25 F Lagorce	0	0
26 H Noda	0	0
27 T Inoue	0	0
£1m		
28 M Blundell	0	0
29 J-C Boullion	0	0
30 K Brack	0	0
31 K Burt	0	0
32 E Collard	0	0
33 N Fontana	0	0
34 D Franchitti	0	0
35 N Larini	0	0
36 J Magnussen	0	0
37 A Prost	0	0
38 G Tarquini	0	0
39 K Wendlinger	0	0

CHASSIS

£20m		
40 Benetton	16	108
41 Williams	20	153
£18m		
42 Ferrari	-5	90
£15m		
43 McLaren	14	108
£14m		
44 Sauber	0	44
45 Jordan	12	54
£10m		
46 Ligier	12	71
£6m		
47 Tyrrell	11	36
£5m		
48 Arrows	-2	13
£3m		
49 Minardi	-3	-11
£1m		
50 Forti	-4	-12

ENGINES

£26m		
51 Renault	20	156
£18m		
52 Ferrari	0	110
£15m		
53 Mercedes	16	127
£12m		
54 Peugeot	13	70
£10m		
55 Mugen	14	105
£8m		
56 Ford V10	11	75
£6m		
57 Yamaha	12	51
£4m		
58 Hart	0	13
£3m		
59 Ford Zetec V8	0	0
£2m		
60 Ford ED V8	0	34

WIN a drive in a Grand Prix car

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points at the end of the Grand Prix Championship season will win our top prize - a drive in a 650bhp F1 car.

You will be flown to the AGS team's training school in the south of France for the most exhilarating experience of your life. The school specialises in F1 courses and provides all the racewear and instruction you will need for a day driving F1 and other single seat cars.

INDIVIDUAL GRAND PRIX PRIZES STILL TO BE WON

You can enter our Formula 1 Dream Team game at any time during the grand prix season. Even if you don't win our top prize, don't worry, there are still prizes to be won with each grand prix race. Enter for the British Grand Prix and you could win a limited edition Jordan grand prix



watch. Get The Independent on Wednesday 10 or Thursday 11 July for details on how to register.

FRENCH GRAND PRIX PRIZE WINNER

Congratulations to Mr R Campbell from Halesowen, West Midlands and his team Hot Rod 1. He has won a pair of tickets to the German Grand Prix.

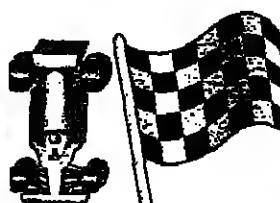
Overall Top 50 Dream Teams

Fifty teams are in joint 1st position with 396 points

- 1 The 7 Percenters
- 1 Follow Me Please Racing
- 1 Drack
- 1 Hill's Decline
- 1 Stagnant 3
- 1 Smith's Sizzlers
- 1 Emily Zoom
- 1 Track Suit Racing UK
- 1 Eagle Racing
- 1 Skidlids
- 1 Team Shambles
- 1 Overdrive
- 1 Diesel Dreamers
- 1 Vernotti Racing
- 1 Cockney Racers

- 1 Rice F1
- 1 Bryan's Bullets
- 1 Jack Burchell Ford
- 1 Inglis Team
- 1 Sicol Racing
- 1 Team Muttley
- 1 Nathan
- 1 Sutts
- 1 Ollie's Team
- 1 Charlton Lamb
- 1 Dave's Drivers
- 1 Team Milne
- 1 Go Willit Go
- 1 Sandow 2
- 1 Piston Broke 2
- 1 The 85 Bears
- 1 Girdlers Grid Stars
- 1 The Dukes of Hazzod
- 1 Mystic Murray's F1
- 1 Phoenix Racing

- 1 PJB Racetec
- 1 Micro Power
- 1 Wilkys
- 1 Hilliams
- 1 Orkney F1 GP
- 1 Ruddocks Racers
- 1 Ascending
- 1 Mode Alfa
- 1 JTF 1
- 1 Aphex Twin Carbs
- 1 Larkeys Magic
- 1 Palace GP
- 1 Brixton 1
- 1 Leading Lights
- 1 Scott One
- 1 Inter-Netty Norton



Join over 25,000 readers who are playing Formula 1 Dream Team



Looking ahead: Hussain is back in Test cricket, and this time he intends to stay

Photograph: Robert Hallam

Responsibility brings the best out of Hussain

Graham Thorpe was sitting with his feet up in the dilapidated old pavilion at Southend, reading the paper, 143 to his name and without a care in the world, no doubt looking forward to tomorrow's third Test at Trent Bridge.

"Go away Thorpe, I'm doing an interview," Nasser Hussain said as he drew up a couple of stools nearby. "I'll just stay and listen to the first question and then I'll fall asleep," Thorpe replied.

It has taken Hussain a while, but following his century in the first Test against India at Edgbaston hopes are high that he has finally established his place in the England team alongside Thorpe. The third member of the "dream" middle order that played together on the England A tour of Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1990-91 - Mark Ramprakash - is almost certain to return to Test cricket at a later date.

Of the three Hussain is, at 28, the oldest by some 18 months, a contemporary of the England captain Mike Atherton (they were born five days apart, Atherton in Manchester, Hussain in Madras). He made his England debut, at Sabina Park, Jamaica, before either Thorpe or Ramprakash but a combination of injury, inconsistency and an uneasy relationship with authority has severely limited his opportunities.

While Thorpe was playing his 27th Test and Ramprakash awaits his 20th, Edgbaston was just Hussain's eighth, the last of which had been three years before. To score his first hundred for England, therefore, on a decidedly difficult wicket was all the more satisfying.

"It was very pleasing," Hussain admitted. "I'd been out of the side and there was a lot of pressure hanging at No 3. There's been a bit of hard work gone in over the past couple of years and it was nice to come in and play a large part towards winning a Test match."

"It was very easy to come back into that side. There were a lot of people I'd played a lot of cricket with. When I first got in the side there were people like Lamb, Gooch, Smith, who were my heroes. It's different playing with people you've known. You don't have to be careful what you say all the time and you can enjoy the dressing-room atmosphere."

Hussain has had his share of misfortune over the years, not the least of which is the fact that his two senior tours to date were both to the West Indies. On the first he managed to break his wrist early on, playing tennis, and on the second, in 1994, he did not play a Test. On returning to England that summer he began with two centuries in two matches but was left out of the squad for the one-day series with New Zealand.

"That was the most disappointed I've ever been at being left out," he said. "I let my head drop a bit and instead of saying, 'I'll show 'em', I

Once labelled a problem, Nasser Hussain returned to Test cricket in England's awkward No 3 berth, and promptly scored a century. He talked to Adam Szreter

thought sod it, and went out there a bit too relaxed and not that keen on cricket. It only lasted two or three weeks, but form is a funny thing, and once you mess around with it like that you get yourself into bad habits and bad ways. I found myself horribly out of form and for the second half of that season I played poorly."

Hussain's remedy involved getting married that autumn and spending the winter in Cape Town, working on his game. He returned last summer and enjoyed his best season for Essex, scoring 1,854 runs at an average of 54. He was rewarded with the England A captaincy for the tour to Pakistan.

"My first thought was that I was a little disappointed because I wasn't on the South African trip. But that was immediately forgotten when I was given the captaincy. It gives you a po-

'I've been relaxed for the last two Tests... I think I'd be a much worse player if I got nervous'

sition of responsibility. A tour, B tour, whatever, it's capturing an England side, you're made to feel important.

"Having said that though, what I needed at that stage of my career was to play for England. That's what I've needed all along. People make a lot of the fact that I've changed, but basically all the way through I've been exactly the same sort of character. I've not changed. It's just that, with responsibility, now I'm allowed to say a lot of things that I wasn't allowed to say when I was younger."

"So really the main thing is playing for England, not captaining A tours. Graham Thorpe's been on 12 A tours," Hussain remarked pointedly as his Surrey opponent finally decided he had had enough and wandered off. He may not have been on 12, but it is surprising to realise that Thorpe was on four A tours before he cemented his Test place.

Responsibility was given to Hussain not just by England but by his county too, who made him vice-captain. It has been a sweet chapter of events for a player whose behaviour has apparently not always been as serene as his cover drives. But this is not the story of a prodigal son - not yet, anyway.

"The way it's been is just that, with all respect to the press, they look at

Nasser Hussain and think, what can we write about him? What can we do about his character? And if you play 10 years in the Essex dressing-room you're going to have the odd little flare-up because that's the way we are. So you get labelled a bit of a bad boy. What annoys me slightly is if you get labelled a prima donna, which is what I'm not. It's just a desire to do well and I've learned to push that aggression into the opposition."

Hussain was out without scoring at Southend, but tomorrow is another day and a chance for another England century. "I'm relaxed about it," he said. "I've been relaxed for the last two Tests and that's the way I'm going to be. I think I'd be a much worse player if I got nervous."

"It's a very important Test for us, we're desperate to win the series after all the hard work we've done. We don't want to let ourselves down by having a poor session, and that's all you need in Test cricket really, one poor session. We almost had one at Lord's until Jack and Thorpe pulled it round for us."

Looking ahead to the challenge of Pakistan later this month, Hussain said: "It will be very hard, we're not kidding ourselves. We've had a lot of good press this summer about the atmosphere in the camp, about how we're playing our cricket. It's key that when things get a bit more difficult, we keep those sort of things going and, like we did at Lord's, show some fight when not everything is going our way. That's what we'll have to do if the balls start reverse swinging or Mushtaq starts bowling well. We're going to have to get stuck in."

"They are, on their day, the best side in the world. But as we have seen from them, if you can mess them around a bit and play well against them they can soon have ructions in their camp."

Despite his chequered career, Hussain has been spoken of as a possible alternative England captain if things start to go wrong for Atherton. "If someone asked you if you want to be England captain, you'd have to look at yourself very hard in the mirror before turning it down," he said.

"But, without putting words into my mouth, that's so far away from what I'm looking at at the moment. Atherton is a great captain. All the boys are 100 per cent behind him. He's a very relaxed character, it rubs off on the rest of the boys and we all enjoy his style of leadership."

Atherton, for his part, will merely be hoping his old adversary from as long ago as county under-12 matches will be around to enjoy his style of leadership for some years to come.

Quality batting needed to keep Sussex bowling along

Inactivity during the last round of fixtures robbed Kent, Leicestershire and Sussex of the opportunity to sustain momentum in what is developing into an intriguing open County Championship. This time the leaders, Yorkshire, who have played at least one match more than all of their rivals, are sidelined as they entertain South Africa A at Headingley over three days, beginning today.

Like Kent in the last round, they may be overtaken in their absence. However, their splendid victory over Worcestershire on Monday, achieved with only 10 minutes remaining on a day when no other match reached a positive conclusion, puts their southern rival under more pressure than might have been anticipated to beat Durham at Nidstone.

Yorkshire's 111-run win at New Road, driven by the performance of Darren Gough, opened up a handy lead for David Byas's confident team. With 140 points in the bank they are safe, for the moment, from Leicestershire and Sussex. On 121 points, second-placed Kent still have Yorkshire within range and they would regret failing to secure a fifth win of the season against bottom-of-the-table Durham.

Yorkshire's triumph emphasised how competitive they have become under Byas's leadership, underlined afterwards in the words of Richard Stemp, understandably delighted at defeating his former county.

"We never said die and even when the minutes were ticking by towards six o'clock everybody was still giving everything they got," Stemp said. "I think that's a big difference from last year when in the same situation we would have probably petered out and settled for a draw."

THE WEEK AHEAD

But such qualities are by no means exclusive to Yorkshiremen, and the emergence of similarly positive attitudes elsewhere as counties follow the lead set by Warwickshire is playing a part in making this year's Championship a fascinating contest.

Leicestershire, who thoroughly outplayed Yorkshire at Bradford last month, have developed a strong sense of self-belief under James Whitaker's captaincy while the alliance of coach Desmond Haynes with skipper Alan Wells appears to be working wonders for Sussex, who go into their match against Hampshire at Arundel, starting today, in fifth position, having won four of their last five matches.

Sussex finished 15th last season, but Wells believes that a bowling attack in which former England pace man Paul Jarvis cannot currently find a place could sustain a title challenge.

"We feel any side is beatable now," Wells said. "At the moment we are bowling as well as a Test attack. It's up to the batsmen to get as many runs as possible because with our bowling talent we can win games."

The brightest spark has undoubtedly been the 20-year-old all-rounder Danny Law, fourth in the national first-class bowling averages with 24 wickets at 19.16. Among English-qualified bowlers with 20 wickets or more only Kent's Mark Ealham, drafted into the Test squad this week, has been more economical.

Jason Lewry, the left-arm, looks an increasingly useful strike bowler

and forms a decent new-ball partnership with Ed Giddins, the county's leading wicket-taker with 30 scalps so far. Meanwhile the leg-spinner, Ian Salisbury, after a period in which he seemed to find bowling a struggle, is back in Test contention.

Sussex's batting, however, does not inspire quite the same confidence and Haynes is candid enough to admit that there are shortcomings in that department. "If we had one or two batsmen of class alongside the skipper I would certainly back us to win the Championship," he said.

Haynes may find such a batsman thwarting his attempts to make further progress at Arundel, where Hampshire's Robin Smith, with scores of 141 and 179 in his last two Championship matches, will seek to reinforce his bid for a Test recall.

Fourth-placed Leicestershire also face a batsman in form in former England captain Graham Gooch, who arrives with Essex at Grace Road tomorrow with hundreds in each of the last three Championship rounds, his 149 against Surrey at Southend having lifted him to 10th place in the game's list of century-making fame with 124 in his career, one more than Denis Compton and only two short of WG Grace.

Derbyshire remain third despite their defeat at Northampton but also sit out the coming round, providing South Africa A's opposition at Chesterfield, starting on Saturday. They may find themselves dropping several places with sixth-placed Surrey and Middlesex (eighth), who meet at the Oval, also in a position to overtake, as are champions Warwickshire (7th), who tackle Nottinghamshire at Edgbaston.

Jon Culey

It is now impossible for players to captain both country and county

When three things happen, we journalists detect a trend; and last week, three things happened in different corners of the cricket world that added up to something interesting.

First, Mike Atherton took a few days off in the Lake District, rather than play in Lancashire's Championship match against Somerset. This had happened before; what was new was that several other members of the England team for Lord's took a break, too - Graeme Hick, Chris Lewis and Peter Martin.

Then, almost unnoticed in the papers here, Hansie Cronje resigned as captain of Orange Free State, on the grounds that, as captain of South Africa, he had too many outside commitments. Cronje is 26.

Then, even more unnoticed in the papers here, Mark Taylor resigned as captain of New South Wales. In only 20 months as captain of Australia, Taylor has established himself as probably the best captain in the world: cool, shrewd, inventive and quietly forceful. He has made the difficult task of succeeding Allan Border look easy; he has returned victorious from the West Indies, unlike Border or any other captain of the past 23 years; and he has persuaded some hard-nosed team-mates that success is compatible with sportsmanship. And at 31, he has time to get even better. Crazy itineraries used to be a facet of cricket in which England led the world, but now, as in other areas, we are being left behind by the Australians. In the next 20 months, Taylor

and his team are due to tour Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India, South Africa, England and either India or Pakistan. They also have home series against the West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand, and two triangular one-day tournaments. In the coming season, New South Wales will be able to call on Taylor (not to mention Steve Waugh, Mark Waugh, Michael Slater, Glenn McGrath, Michael Bevan...) for precisely two matches.

The message is clear: it is now virtually impossible for players from the major cricket nations to captain both their country and their county or state. Atherton, who is younger than most England captains and made of stern stuff, has found the job so demanding that even when he does play for Lancashire, he is a shadow of the consistent run-maker he used to be. Imagine what sort of shape he would be in if he was their captain.

Captains of Pakistan tend to be thrown out before they have a chance to get worn out, and India and Sri Lanka don't play abroad enough to come into the argument. But captaining West Indies and the Leeward Islands, on and off, was too much for Richie Richardson, who took a year off to recover from exhaustion, and was never quite the same again.

He has been succeeded by



TIM DE LISLE

Courtney Walsh, who is making a bold bid to be the exception to the rule: he is not only captain of Gloucestershire but also of Jamaica, as well as being older than his international counterparts (34 in October) and a fast bowler to boot. But as he has been official captain of West Indies for only two Tests, it is too early to draw conclusions.

All this is good news for Nasser Hussain. By captaining England A with distinction last winter, Hussain has established himself as a good captain without having to lead his county. He was disappointed to be piped to the Essex captaincy 18 months ago by Paul Prichard, and it is by no means clear that it was the right decision for Essex. But it looks very much the best thing for Hussain, who is now able to concentrate on establishing himself in the England side and can switch off to some extent between Test matches. And since he is not captaining anyone, he cannot lose his reputation as a fine leader of men.

If Atherton were to break a finger in the nets today, Hussain would not captain England tomorrow. There is no official vice-captain for home Tests, but now that Alec Stewart has been demoted to Nick Knight's understudy, the role is thought to be occupied by Jack Russell. He, too, has managed to collect captaincy

experience without being an official county captain - his one season in charge of Gloucestershire, in 1995, came about because Walsh was on tour with the West Indians.

Russell did well, and became a better, less introverted player for it; but no wicketkeeper in living memory has been more than a stopgap captain of England, and although Russell will encounter two skipper-keepers this winter, in Lee Gernon and Andy Flower, it is fair to say that their jobs are not quite so taxing as Atherton's or Taylor's.

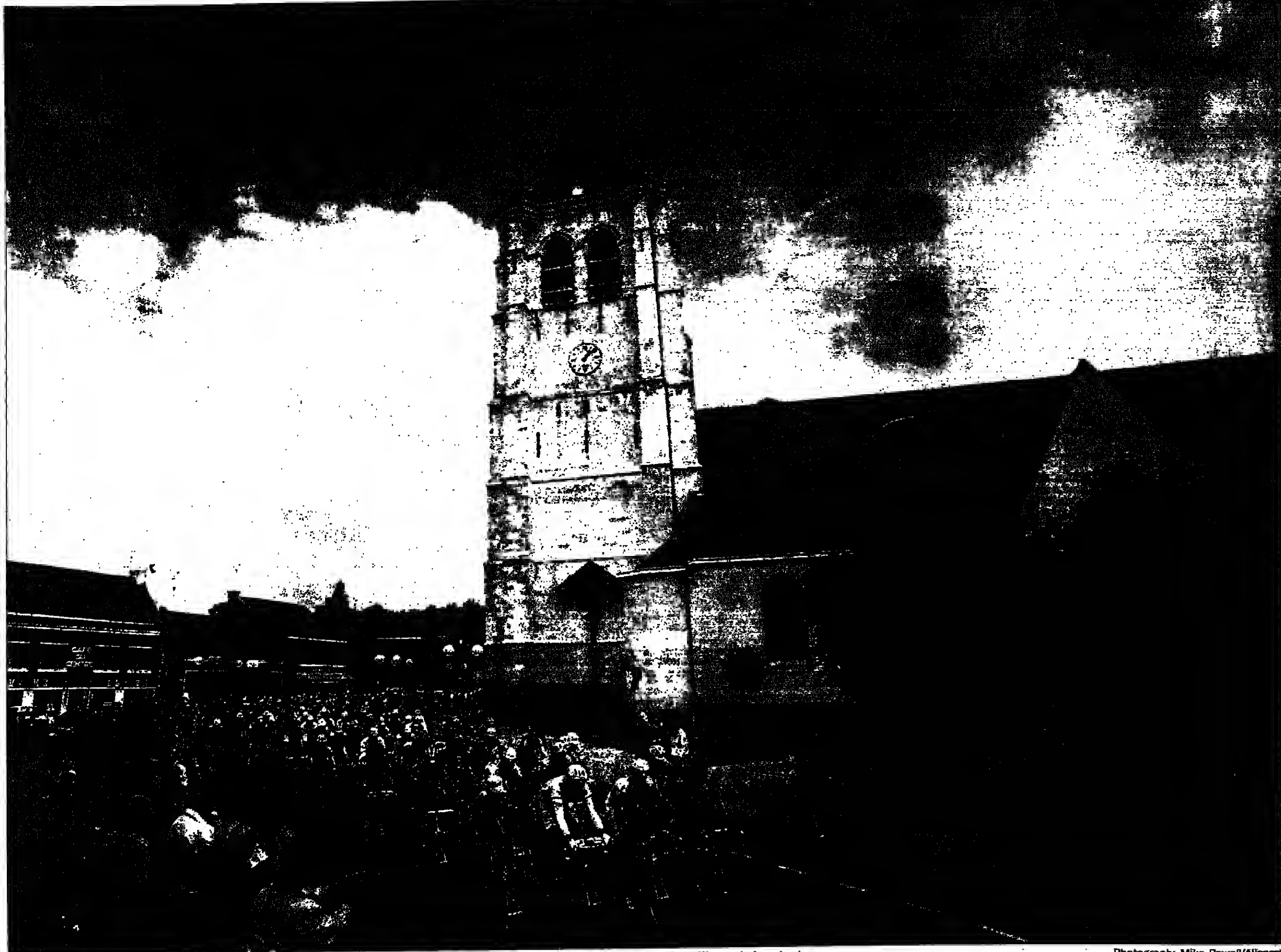
Cricketers used to come in two categories, Gentleman and Player. When that dismal distinction came to an end, there was still Capped and Uncapped - a division which if it were brought in, say, football, would be taken as a sure sign that the manager had gone mad. These days a third division is taking over: between the internationals and the rest.

Most cricketers in Australia are not even professionals, yet Mark Taylor is expected to earn A\$900,000 (£450,000) in the next two years. He and the other Test regulars are contracted to the national board; so are their opposite numbers in South Africa. In England, such a change will be resisted by the counties. Last week's resting arrangements, tactfully engineered by David Lloyd, show that this is the way things are going, whether the counties like it or not.

Tim de Lisle is editor of *Wisden Cricket Monthly*.

55 من الاجل

Moncassin seizes the yellow jersey



The peloton winds into the village of Villeneuve d'Ascq during the third stage of the Tour de France, a 195-kilometre ride from Wasquehal yesterday

Photograph: Mike Powell/Alisport



Did you guess our hidden personality?

Hidden Personality
Did you guess? The former schoolboy football star, who takes care in choosing his friends, the man offered a trial by Brentford FC who, on his first-class debut, bowled David Gower, is the Surrey and England left-hander Graham Thorpe.

ROBIN NICHOLL

reports from Nogent-sur-Oise

The yellow jersey of Tour de France leader was back in the GAN camp last night – for the first time since Chris Boardman pulled it on after his debut victory in the 1994 Tour.

Boardman's French team-mate, Frederic Moncassin, snatched the colours from Switzerland's Alex Zülle in the 195km stage from Wasquehal, but Boardman, suffering with a recurring chest infection, was looking to the future.

"Even if it gets bad and I lose time, I will just keep going to get to Paris. Whatever, it remains the No 1 objective," Boardman said, knowing that in four days' time he faces a 30km mountain time trial to the ski resort of Val d'Isère.

Squally rain punctuated sunny spells and did little for Boardman's condition. "I am not feeling brilliant, but it's just a case of getting through this lot." Despite his fall on Monday and his current problem, he is still eighth, 24 seconds behind Moncassin in the overall standings, with the Frenchman seven seconds clear of the deposed Zülle and Russia's Yevgeny Berzin a threatening third, just 10 seconds in arrears.

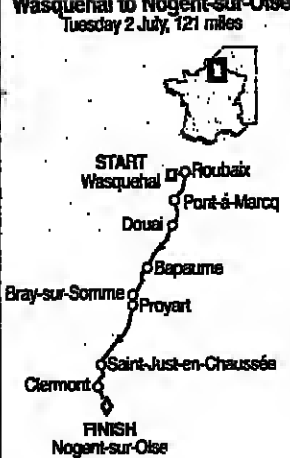
"I lost confidence in my sprinting on Monday because it was not coming together so well," Boardman said, after earning a time deduction of eight seconds for his third placing at the finish.

"In the last five kilometres I realised that I had a chance, but it was very dangerous with so many teams racing for victory. I was certainly nervous."

Most eyes were on Moncassin as the sprinters surged towards the finish. Mario Cipollini was driving the race from the front and, as he glanced to see Moncassin at his back wheel, Germany's Erik Zabel sprinted past.

Yesterday: Stage 3

Wasquehal to Nogent-sur-Oise
Tuesday 2 July, 121 miles



Today: Stage 4

Soissons to Lac de Madine
Wednesday 3 July, 144 miles



Zabel's victory did nothing to the rest of the top ten but it tamed the Lion King – Cipollini – for the day. He produced his 17th victory of the season on Monday, the day after he was relegated from third for cutting up Moncassin.

The Italian has several reputations, all based on speed. His best known is as the fastest finisher on a bike. He also likes to drive fast cars – the latest is a Mercedes – and motor cycles. He owns a Harley-Davidson.

Cipollini is currently in a defiant mood off the bike. He insists on wearing red shorts to match his national champion's jersey in the colours of the Italian tricolore.

Cipollini should be wearing black shorts, like the rest of his team, and cooking a snack at the regulations costs 300 Swiss francs in daily fines.

Depending on the day, he can change his nickname as quick as his shorts. He is also recognised as El Magnifico, Super Mario, Super Macho and more, but yesterday he was just a beaten favourite. His team provided their usual high-speed launch-pad, chasing down a move that included Boardman's team-mate, Eddy Seigneur, and then setting a pace so high that the rest clung gratefully in their slip stream.

The move of Seigneur and company was doomed from the outset. Avaricious sprinters such as Cipollini need to grab

success while they can, and time is running out. Friday brings the first Alpine stage.

Seigneur, however, was in his home region. Oise, and naturally wanted to look good in company with the Italian, Marco Lotti, and Spain's Jose Luis Arrieta.

It was a brief dream but at least they tried on a day when the racing was as flat as the exposed terrain where crosswinds affected matters, and the riders again finished more than an hour behind schedule.

Today's 232km to Lake Madine is an undulating stage, but there is still a chance for Cipollini to pull himself closer to his 100th professional victory – unless one of the new breed of fast finishers such as Zabel has other plans.

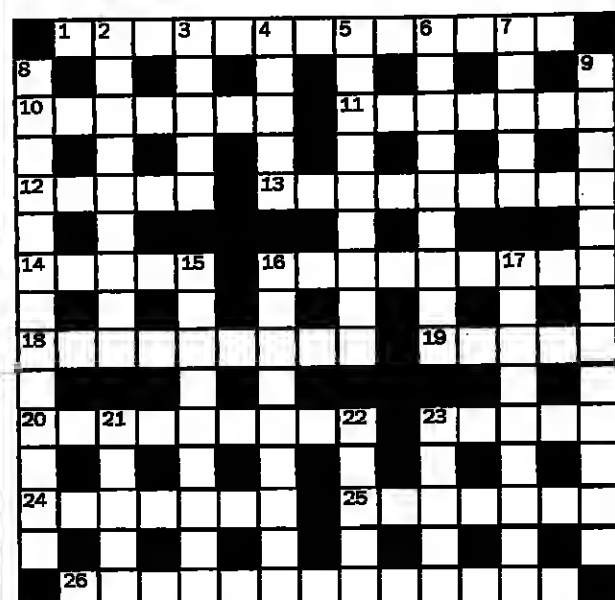
TOUR DE FRANCE 1990 Stage 3 (121.2 miles, Wasquehal to Nogent-sur-Oise): 1. E. Zabel (Ger, Deutsche Telekom) 5hr 23min 21.5sec; 2. M. Cipollini (It, SAATCHI) 3. F. Moncassin (Fr, GAN); 4. J. Berzin (Rus, Gewiss); 5. J. Berzin (Rus, Gewiss); 6. F. Moncassin (Fr, GAN); 7. C. Cipollini (It, Alcatel); 8. N. Minal (Fr, Gewiss); 9. C. Cipollini (It, Alcatel); 10. M. Travencon (It, Carrera); 11. E. Magliani (Fr, Festina); 12. A. Tormin (Lux, Lotto); 13. D. Abougar (Ukr, Refini); 14. A. Pille (Lux, Refini); 15. B. Riss (Ger, Deutsche Telekom); 16. L. Brocard (Fr, Festina) of same time. Overall standings: 1. Moncassin (Fr, GAN) 2. A. Zülle (Sui, ONCE) +28; 3. J. Berzin (Rus, Gewiss) +10sec; 4. A. Ochoa (Esp, Mapre) +2.4; 5. B. Riss (Ger, Deutsche Telekom) +3.6; 6. M. Travencon (It, Carrera) +4.1; 7. L. Brocard (Fr, Festina) +4.2; 8. C. Cipollini (It, Alcatel) +4.3; 9. J. Berzin (Rus, Gewiss) +4.4; 10. M. Travencon (It, Carrera) +4.5; 11. E. Magliani (Fr, Festina) +4.6; 12. A. Tormin (Lux, Lotto) +4.7; 13. D. Abougar (Ukr, Refini) +4.8; 14. A. Pille (Lux, Refini) +4.9; 15. B. Riss (Ger, Deutsche Telekom) +5.0; 16. L. Brocard (Fr, Festina) +5.1; 17. C. Cipollini (It, Alcatel) +5.2; 18. J. Berzin (Rus, Gewiss) +5.3; 19. M. Travencon (It, Carrera) +5.4; 20. S. Hestak (Fr, GAN) +5.5.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3029, Wednesday 3 July

By Aquila

Yesterday's Solution



ACROSS

- 1 Roadhouse entrance needs four different keys (9,4)
- 10 Straw for domestic fowl (7)
- 11 Part-time judge not conservative? Request a new one! (2,5)
- 12 A song for unaccompanied voices is out of tune (5)
- 13 Dry places wrecked this old timer (9)
- 14 Netcord, say, is let if ordered (5)
- 16 High jinks in Equus, possibly (9)
- 18 World angle of the main subject of inflation (5,4)
- 19 Blake's symmetrical night-burner? (5)

DOWN

- 20 Describing ranges of blue, green and white in America (9)
- 23 To start a row, apply oneself (3,2)
- 24 Hairstyle seen on the beach (7)
- 25 The most grim red hats brought out (7)
- 26 Striker not back at work (6,7)
- 2 Jester in opera let trio go mad (9)
- 3 Halter of energy shortly to come up (5)
- 4 Fear of bad pain accompanying cold? (5)
- 5 Element thin on the ground (4,5)
- 6 Lookout for high tars? (5,4)

7 Dull fellow, dead in a way (5)

- 8 Jumping over firm banks, balancing (8,5)
- 9 Margaret involved with youth in port (5,8)
- 15 See first at Beverly having girth adjusted? It's a plant! (9)
- 16 Switch a musical number (9)
- 17 Lethargy I controlled over this immense distance (5,4)
- 21 Lady-love with bad upset (5)
- 22 Brutish sort found back in country-dance circles? (5)
- 23 Common salary spiral (5)

Published by Newspaper Publishing PLC, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, and printed at Mirror Colour Print, St Albans Road, Watford. Back issues available from Heston Newspapers, 0800 006000. Wednesday 3 July 1990. Registered as a newspaper with the Post Office.

FRENCH MASTERPIECES from MOSCOW



THE HAGUE 13 JULY - 13 OCTOBER

- Return flights available from all UK airports, or by Eurostar
- 2 nights B&B in the centre of Amsterdam or The Hague
- Extra nights available from £39
- Guaranteed entrance ticket to the Exhibition

PRAGUE from £224

2 nights in centrally located *** Hotel Julian, en suite bathroom, B&B.

PARIS from £99

2 nights in centrally located ** Altona Hotel, en suite bathroom, B & B. Includes Eurostar.

BARCELONA from £172

2 nights in centrally located ** Hotel, en suite bathroom, B & B.

MADRID from £164

2 nights in centrally located ** Hotel, en suite bathroom, B & B.

All prices include all airport taxes. Prices based upon 2 sharing a room. Single room supplements apply. ALL OFFERS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. For reservations phone Mon to Fri 09.00 to 18.00: 0181-960 9066 CITYTRAVELLER DIRECT LTD 4 Exmoor St, London W10 6BD